000 /121/ Notes on the Terms and the Kinship System of the Tukano

by Marcos Fulop

/Page 122 is blank. An errata sheet appears between pp. 122 and 123. The errata have been corrected in the text of the translation./

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[101] /123/ The material that is presented here was collected in the period between June 11 and September 9, 1954, during our stay in the hamlet /Sp. caserío/ of Guadalajara, located on the Paca River, a tributary of the Papurí /Papury/ River, in the Comisaría Especial del Vaupés /Uaupés/. Performing the duties of informant and interpreter were Marcos Sierra and Manuel Sierra, respectively, two blood brothers, members of the patrilineal sib /Sp. sib/ Urémiri Sáraro and of the phratry /Sp. fratría/ Yepá Bajuári Majsá.

615 As the investigation went deeper, we became aware of the
361 existence of five phratries, located at great distances from one
197 another, and each one of them speaking a different idiom, since
619 they have adopted the language of their nearest neighbors. It
615 could be proved, nevertheless, that there is a consciousness of
571 tribal unity upon observing the conduct of native members of other
* 574 phratries each time that these landed or spent the night in
[601] Guadalajara. On each occasion the Tukano /Tucano/ visitors who
[101] did not belong to the Yepá Bajuári Majsá phratry used the correspondent kinship terms in their dealings with the Sierra brothers (Urémiri Sáraro sib), and when they were asked to which tribe they belonged, they answered that it was to the tribe Yepá Majsá (Yepá = Land; Majsá = People), which is the name with which the
615 Tukano designate themselves. Sometimes the Tukano who belonged
197 to other phratries did not speak the Tukana /Tucano/ language, and
124 on these occasions Marcos Sierra acted as interpreter for the rest of the inhabitants of Guadalajara. The difficulties of the great
114 distances made it impossible for us to visit other sibs of the Yepá Bajuári Majsá phratry, and, similarly, none of the remaining four
[124] phratries. Therefore, the present study is limited by this factor, as all our information has come from Marcos Sierra, member of the Urémiri Sáraro sib, of the Yepá Bajuári Majsá phratry, and shaman of the hamlet of Guadalajara.

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Aspects of Tucano Culture
Mythology -- Part I

By Marcos Fulop

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114 [101] /337/

Preliminary Note

The material presented here was collected between June 11 and September 9, 1954, when field work was done in the village /Sp. caserío/ of Guadalajara, located on the Paca River, a tributary of the Papurí River, in the Comisaría Especial del Vaupés. Performing the functions of informant and interpreter were Marcos Sierra and Manuel Sierra respectively, blood brothers and residents of the village of Guadalajara.

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The mythology that appears in this article is a very small portion of the total Tukano /Tucano/ mythology. The author has considered it advisable not to analyze individually the myths published here, but to wait until all the Tukano mythology has been collected and published.

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* 539 /339/ I. Boraró and Boraró Numió

A man and a woman stayed in Diaojpekowí, and they were brother and sister. These two beings do not have children, but will never die. When they want to leave Diaojpekowí, they turn themselves into spirits. The man is named Boraró, and the

* 539 761

woman is named Boraró Numió. Boraró and Boraró Numió kill people by opening a hole in their heads and sucking out the entire body through this hole. They leave only the skin of the victim, which they throw on a tree /Sp. palo/. To kill her victim, Boraró Numió lies down face up and begins to urinate at a distance of about 150 meters from her victim. Boraró, to kill his victim, urinates standing at a distance of about 150 meters from his victim. And when Boraró and Boraró Numió urinate, everyone that is within those 150 meters falls dead instantly.

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Aspects of Tukano /Tucano/ Culture Cosmogony

by Marcos Fulop

[121 122] /Page 98 is blank./

/99/ Commissioned by the Dirección of the Instituto Colombiano de Antropología, we are initiating ethnographic studies among the natives of the Comisaría Especial del Vaupés. We have considered it convenient to begin the anthropological study of the cultures of this region with the Tukano /Tucano/ group.

114 [101] 124 128 772 772 769 The material that is published below was gathered during our stay in the settlement of Guadalajara, on the Paca River, from June 13 to July 9, 1953. Our informant was Marcos Sierra, and Manuel Sierra, the brother of the preceding, served as interpreter. Owing to the short time of the investigation and to having consulted only one informant, we are not able to guarantee the exactitude of the version of the Tukano cosmogony given by Marcos Sierra. This cosmogony is repeated in the manner of a cult to the ancestors during the feasts of Dabukurí and Yuruparí.

105 [171] The Tukano culture is actually representative of the cultures of the tropical forests of South America. Their regimen of life is sedentary; they practice horticulture, and bitter yuca (1)

1. Manihot utilissima.

constitutes the basis of their alimentation, which is supplemented with products obtained by means of hunting and fishing; they are efficient in the construction and handling of river vessels; they use the hammock for a bed; they possess the art of ceramics and do not know metalurgy.

131 The Tukano Indians are found located on the lower Vaupés /Uaupés/ River, from the falls of Ipanoré to the outlet of the Vaupés into the Río Negro; on the Tiquié and Papurí /Papury/ rivers; and on small streams that empty into these three rivers.

105 /104 cont./
abduction, they practice the couvade, there is segregation of the woman during menstruation, there are initiation ceremonies for the boys who have reached puberty, and there is social stratification with castes.

177 [797] Since the arrival of the religious Missionary and the rubber worker in the region, two important phenomena have occurred. The most significant and most noticeable one is the rapid incorporation and diffusion of occidental material culture. The aluminum pot has replaced the pottery bowl, trousers have replaced the loincloth, the cotton dress has taken the place of the tree-bark skirt, hunting is no longer done with bow and arrow, but with a shotgun, and fishing is more often done with the fishhook than with the trap.

[182] [797] [584] [601] [575] [178] In the field of spiritual culture the influence of occidental culture has been more subtle and not so rapidly accepted. It is certain that the system of social organization is suffering a process of disintegration; the Indian who wishes to have a woman must be willing to settle in a mission, because the Missionaries have shrewdly gathered together all the women of marriageable age and have taken them to the Missions; the kinship terms no longer correspond to the present system; very few Indians still practice polyandry; but in spite of all this evidence, an adult Tukano [262] [753] [178] Indian of today has not stopped thinking according to the typical Tukano mental processes. For example, Manuel Sierra, our interpreter, in spite of having lived for four consecutive years with his wife in the Departamento del Tolima, in Central Colombia, and in spite of having left the Vaupés at 17 years of age, still has the /105/ conviction that having eaten fish after the birth of his son without a Tukano shaman's having "blown" the food beforehand was the cause of the appearance of ulcers on his legs.

773 177 [128] [014] The Tukano cosmogony presented below shows clearly the phenomenon of the transculturation. The short time available for this first journey of contact with Tukano culture did not permit us to check this cosmogony with other informants. Our informant, 115 756 Marcos Sierra, is a shaman in the settlement of Guadalajara, on the Paca River.

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*101 797 in their anonymous heroism for 40 years by the intelligent dynamism and the apostolic charity of Dom Pedro Massa.

• 114 In the beginning of this century the well-known German ethnologist Teodoro /Theodor/ Koch Grünberg visited part of the area presented in our studies here, and he condensed his observations into several works, especially the one that bears the title "Dos anos entre os índios do noroeste /6/ Brasileiro /Two Years among the Indians of Northwest Brazil/" (1).

1. Zwei Iahre /Jahre/ bei den Indianer nordwest-Brasiliens -- Stuttgart, 1921. His work Festschrift Eduard Seler, containing the classification and location of the several tribes that he visited or from which he obtained information, dates from Stuttgart, 1922.

We are now in a position to appreciate, not only the inconveniences of his journey, but also his difficulties as a "White" and a "Foreigner," having to deal with the Indians locked in their distrust, prejudices, and, let us say it, hostilities against civilized people: moreover, not knowing the idioms of the tribes of the Uaupés (2)

2. At the mouth of the river Curicuriari, Koch's oarsman, the Tukano /Tucano/ João, gives him a lesson in "unintelligible Tukano": -- "Gibt mir Unterricht in Tucano seiner fürchterlichen Stammessprach, voll nasaler, gutturaler und ganz UNDEUTLICHER laute" /he gives me instruction in Tucano, his horrible original language, very nasal, gutteral, and quite confusedly loud/.

and, for this reason, having to resort to the always deficient services of emergency interpreters.

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Our task, of editing, in comparison with that of Koch G., was greatly facilitated. There fell to us the intellectual, patriotic, and religious pleasure of four excursions through the vast and laborious field of the Apostolado Salesiano no Amazonas /Salesian Apostolate in Amazonas/ and of admiring the work of patriotism and evangelical charity that the Filhos de Dom Bosco are achieving there. And benefiting ourselves by means of their company, their knowledge of the native idioms (3),

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> 3. Besides having already found numerous Indians with whom we could communicate perfectly in the language of our native country, because they had learned Portuguese in the schools of the Missions.

the prestige that they enjoy, not only among the natives who profit from their material and moral assistance, but even among the others who only know them by repute, we start collecting the precious data of their observations and experience. The ethnographic material contained in these pages could be collected in a relatively short period, although triple that of Grünberg. Nevertheless they describe an existence in the closest possible contact with the forest dwellers: living in their maloca, attending their festivities, listening to them during their long chats among themselves, and entertaining themselves in amiable conversation with them, participating in their joys and their sorrows, observing them in their work, admiring their abilities, using their services, curing their illnesses, probing their spirit, illustrating their intelligence in long years of education, illuminating their soul with religious truths, now and then seeing those minds unexpectedly open in flashes that reveal, through a charming ingenuousness, an internal world never dreamed of. One understands an environment by living in it; and the environment can explain to us a mentality.

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/11 cont./

103 133 Although it presents an average declivity of 0.32 m. per kilometer, it possesses a subsoil of granite, with innumerable levelings and cachoeiras (3)

[114] 3. The Comissão Brasileira de Fronteiras /Brazilian Commission of Frontiers/, under the direction of Marechal /Marshal/ Boanerges Lopes de Souza, who did the surveying of this river, recorded 39 cachoeiras. Moreover, it has some islets and islands, and therefore its width reaches 500 meters.

[505] which endanger navigation. Or, rather, it is only passable with small canoes and montarias (4),

[501] 4. "Montarias" are the canoes that have been enlarged by one or more longitudinal planks fitted to their sides.

which sometimes advance through the rushing rapids by arm or pulled by tow ropes, or are even transported across the rocks or bordering forest by way of the "varadoiros" (5).

5. "Varadoiros" are the passages opened up in the forest, or along the rivers in the stretches that are not navigable; or as shortcuts between two points, in order to avoid the long windings of the rivers.

The Tiquié is the other tributary, and more important than the Papurí. It results from two igarapés, or streams: the Uaracú-pirera (in Nheengatú it means "skin of aracú /a fish/"), which takes the name of Tiquié, a name of unknown origin and meaning (also like Caiarí and Papurí), after it receives the Macucú. Those of Tukano language name the Tiquié "Kõsá," the meaning of which, however, they do not know. Extremely sinuous, it measures about 450 kilometers in course, almost all

/44 cont./

*101 Koch makes the similarity of this idiom with the first two stand out immediately. In August of 1956 a tuxáua /chief/ of the Ide-masã or Makuna informed us that the Buhágana formerly resided in the forests of the river Taraira (trib. of the Japurá), but they had already died out as a consequence of the avengements within the tribe and the fights with other tribes.

It is not improbable that the Jacamim, located by Wallace on the Uaupés, are only a tribal subdivision, perhaps the Taitõ-paramẽra, that is "Grandchildren of the Jacamim" (cf. below the subdivisions of the Korẽterabõa, IV -- 2, p /p. 106 f./).

(7) -- MACUNÁ -- It likewise does not appear in the other lists. Pelo Rio Mar gives a brief report: "Macú of black color" and ends by saying "they are mentioned among the tributaries of the Rio Negro, on the Araganatuba, Apapóris and Jupurá." On the contrary, according to Koch G., they belong to the Tukano group and have their present habitat on the banks of the Apapóris, below the Pirá-paraná, in two malocas. They are types of good configuration, Koch continues, and they speak a language quite close to the Buhágana (Zwei Iahre, 379; and Festschrift Eduard Seler, 205-6).

We can state that Makúna is a denomination that the Colombians give to them. In their own idiom they call themselves Idemasã (water people) and we were with a group of them that resides on the Komé-ya (see below Ide-masã, IV -- 2, h /p. 137/).

[114] [126] Koch does not give in his Zwei Iahre the Vocabulary of the Makúna, but that of the Kueretu. Now, the Vocabulary that we gathered from the Íde-masã deviates considerably from the one that Koch obtained from the Kueretu, in spite of the fact that this group is indicated as a subdivision of the Ide-masã.

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visitor. On the other hand, the leaf-cutter ant is a specialist on clothing. I was once covered by a swarm of these ants while asleep. When I had carefully removed the last of them I was left with but a leather belt and a few tatters of trousers and shirt.

The anopheles mosquito is generally absent in the Cuduiarí region where I did my field work. On the whole, the health of the Cuduiarí Indians is good. Carate (*purú*), a skin pigment disorder apparently of spirochete origin, common everywhere else in the Northwest Amazon, was far less in evidence on the Cuduiarí. Children suffered from worms and other intestinal parasites but infant mortality was not particularly high. There were no epidemics during my stay. The recollections of the Indians about serious illness go back to the 1918 influenza epidemic that apparently ravaged the native populations in the region. Women, in particular, suffered from the painful purulent conjunctivitis, which they attributed to insect molestation in their manioc gardens. The bloated abdomens of children whose diet is too generous with carbohydrate and deficient in protein is a common sight along the Vaupés, but is less evident on the Cuduiarí, where native life and diet is still almost intact. As for the Cuduiarí itself, the people at the mouth of the river, the higher-ranking *Hehénewa* sibs, seemed generally more sturdy, vigorous, and aggressive than the Indians who lived upstream.

Dr. Hamilton Rice, who explored the Vaupés in 1907–08, observed that the most physically powerful Indians came from the Cuduiarí. He noted men who were six feet tall and over, strongly built with thick arms and powerful torsos. Actually somatological variability is considerable on the Cuduiarí, ranging from marked mesomorphy to moderate ectomorphy. But this observation of mine is not based on measurements. Dr. Rice (1910) has published a physical description of the Cubeo based upon anthropometric observations. I quote from it:

> Their color is an olive brown corresponding to No. 4 of Broca's scale and seems invariable, a conclusion based on a comparison of the scale with many hundreds of subjects on parts of the cuticle least exposed to sun and pigmented decoration. The eye is dark, palpebral fissure narrow, not oblique, pointed at its external aspect, and the upper lid so heavy at times as to suggest the puffiness of oedema; but the eye by no means conforms invariably to so Mongolian a criterion, closely resembling the European eye in many other cases. The hair is black, lanky, coarse in the male, fine and glossy in the female. The faces are escutcheon-shaped and hairless, the chins rounded and receding, noses from straight and busque to hooked and Chinese flat types, region of cheek bones flat, lower lips large and inclined to turn slightly downward. The ears are not large, lobes absent or slightly devel-

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142 oped: heads of the brachycephalic type: though I have noticed cases of extreme dolichocephalic variations. Teeth are generally poor.

147 Dr. Rice also commented on the capacity of the Cubeo Indians for great exertion on a minimum of food and rest. I can corroborate this judgment. I accompanied Indians on canoe trips when we paddled for as long as 17 consecutive hours with little rest or nourishment other than a handful of manioc meal in water. There was usually no urgent necessity for such exertion or privation. The Indians customarily eat lightly when traveling, and if there is any chance of reaching home rather than camping out or imposing upon the hospitality of another sib they prefer to keep going. However, it was not unusual for strong young men to topple from their canoes in a dead faint upon reaching home. Revived by the river they scrambled ashore, secured the canoe, and entered the house with the appropriate vigorous air, effectively concealing their acute fatigue. It is in fact characteristic of the Cubeo to make light of their accomplishments and not to yield readily to physical weakness.

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114 Ethnographically, the Northwest Amazon was first fully brought to light by Dr. Theodor Koch-Grünberg, ethnographer and museum collector. Koch-Grünberg's systematic survey of the region at the turn of the century covered all main tribes and their settlements along the principal rivers. He spent many weeks on the Cuduiarí among the *Hehénewa* sibs of the Cubeo, and ascended the Cuduiarí to the limits of its habitation (1909). His published reports are invaluable even though he never stayed long enough in one place to get a deep grasp of the culture. He was, however, an excellent observer and reported fully on language, custom, and material culture. I did not read Koch-Grünberg before going to the field so that my observations are totally independent. It is a source of satisfaction, therefore, that our observations agree closely on most details. Koch-Grünberg's information was deficient on social structure and ceremonial patterns. It is in these two respects that my study represents a carrying forward of the work he so ably began. I have drawn freely upon his published works to fill in gaps in my own information on the Cubeo and of course for the rich data on surrounding Tucanoan, Arawakan, and Cariban tribes.

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114 His was the pioneering survey of the entire region, whereas mine is a relatively limited study of a single community. Koch-Grünberg died among the Indians of the Northwest Amazon in 1924, his ethnographic work prematurely cut off.

The first scientific observer to report on the Indians of the Vaupés was Alfred Russell Wallace (1870), who was there in 1853. While his interests were mainly those of the naturalist, he found Indian life to

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be interesting and he recorded tribal distributions and physical conditions of life as well as many customs. It is to Wallace that we owe the first report on mortuary endocannibalism among the Cubeo. Curiously, this information has never been properly authenticated. Wallace learned about it at second hand, as did Koch-Grünberg many years later. I observed what I thought to be this custom, but I could not verify that the bones being prepared for imbibing with chicha were human. The annoyance of the Indians when I accidentally came upon them while they were reducing bones to meal and pouring it into the chicha at the conclusion of a mourning ceremony led me to suspect that the bones were human. In response to my questions, however, no Cubeo would confirm my conjectures.

Wallace (1870, p. 354) traveled up the Vaupés to the mouth of the Cuduiarí River at the rapids of Uaracapurí, where he observed a community of several malocas. He did not enter the Cuduiarí, reporting only that to his knowledge no European had ever gone up that river. As for the Vaupés, this river, particularly in its Brazilian reaches, had in Wallace's time already become an important artery of European trade. Along the Isana River Wallace noted that the Indians were living in European-style dwellings. The Cuduiarí then had the reputation of a totally wild region. The Cubeo Indians seen by Wallace were still wearing large circular wooden plugs in their ears. By 1903, in the time of Koch-Grünberg, this form of male ornamentation had already been given up.

Curt Nimuendajú surveyed the Isana, Aiarí, and Vaupés rivers in 1927. In his notes, published posthumously in 1950, it is revealed that he correctly identified Tucano and Cubeo descent groups as patrilineal clans. He did not, however, enter the Cuduiarí, and his information on that river, being secondhand, is not too reliable.

My own field work on the Cuduiarí began in September 1939 and continued through June 1940. (Goldman, 1948, is a preliminary report.) The Cuduiarí had the advantage of being relatively accessible and as yet almost completely unacculturated. I decided upon the Cuduiarí after a survey of the Cubeo communities along the Vaupés.

CULTURE CHANGE

Cubeo culture has been subjected to acculturative influences from two sources, one from other Indian tribes and the other from European, Colombian, and Brazilian missionaries, settlers, traders, and latex extractors. Cultural interchange among Indian tribes in the Northwest Amazon region is, of course, an old and intricate process,

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with its white residents, they had no reason not to regard it as a friendly place. The *Comisaría* protected their labor rights, supervising terms of contract and entertaining their complaints of unfair treatment. When an Indian completed his term of labor he was "paid off" in the presence of an official in charge of Indian affairs. The Indians regarded the government as fair. The *Comisaría* provided medical aid to those Indians who came to seek it. At the same time it respected native life and interfered with the Indians as little as possible. Although the Cuduiarí is readily accessible from Mitú it was entered only rarely by administrative personnel. When I lived among the *Bahúkiwa* some 15 hours by canoe from Mitú, I had the sense of total isolation from this administrative center. The normal everyday life on the Cuduiarí was completely Indian. In the time of Wallace there had been bad blood between Indians and Colombians, but by the time Koch-Grünberg arrived relations between the Cubeo and the government had already become peaceable.

In Mitú I met Mandú, headman of the *Bahúkiwa* sib of the middle Cuduiarí. He had come to seek medical treatment for his young son, who had injured his knee in a fall. The headman and I became friends and he invited me to visit. When I promptly accepted his invitation I was surprised to find that he had already begun to build a house for me and that the Indians had expected me to settle among them. He had discussed the matter with his people, he told me later, and they had agreed that it would be good to have me live among them. The reasons for wanting me never became too clear, but I came to believe that they thought I would offer them some protection from the pressure of the labor recruiters.

I was informally "adopted" as the younger brother of Mandú. For a while people were amused to address me by an appropriate kinship term. In time this jest lost its freshness and I came to be regarded simply as *pakomá* (kinsman). Nevertheless, I was considered to be a member of Mandú's household even though I had a house of my own alongside the maloca. Mandú sent his older wife, with whom he was no longer living, to serve as my cook. With Mandú's household I had all the privileges of informality. My relations with other households were friendly but more restrained. Since I did not contribute an appropriate share of fish and game to the household, or to the maloca as a whole, I felt obliged to reciprocate food and services with periodic gifts of cloth, tobacco, fishhooks, and ammunition. At one time during a drinking party at which I was not present, a son of Mandú distributed all my trade goods to the guests "in my behalf." However, during the period of many weeks when I no longer had trade goods

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123 my status in the community was as before. I still could count upon food and services.

[122] I participated to some degree in the male life of the community and came to learn the language and the culture as much by slow enculturation as by questioning. I had no principal informants because no one would serve in that capacity. All were willing to talk, to explain matters to me, but only in the accustomed atmosphere of easy and genial chatter. The people I knew best and the household of Mandú, in particular, were paradoxically the poorest systematic informants. They were most impatient and most easily vexed with the informant role. They regarded the open notebook and the persistent line of questioning as counter to our relationship. For prolonged and probing investigations I called upon the head of a *Bahúkiwa* subsib. Even this man was a very patient informant only when he was my guest among the *Bahúkiwa*. On his home grounds we were back on small talk. In Mitú I could talk to Indian women more freely than I could on the Cuduiari, where my relations with them had to be more correct. My house alongside the maloca was an informal social center which children and unattached women felt free to visit without invitation. The children taught me things they thought I ought to know about native customs. This was a privilege they had which adults, with their acute tactfulness about criticizing, intruding, or imposing upon others, could not exercise.

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The Indians placed no serious obstacles in the way of my studies. They would not explain or discuss openly a ritual act at the time it was going on because to do so would be to counteract its effects. They did not, however, mind answering questions later and in a more general context. Moreover, they expected me to preserve the proprieties of tact in asking questions about domestic matters. Sex was a difficult subject, as were invidious comparisons. The Cubeo are not eager purveyors of gossip. After trouble had erupted in the open one could ask for and receive a discreet and sober account of some domestic difficulty. At the same time that the Indians imposed upon me their own reserve they were also sensitive to any evident disappointment when my questions went unanswered. Thus, if I persisted I often could get an answer, but I had to follow protocol, since personal relations among adults are rich in decorum and social etiquette. I also had available to me the more informal channels of the play pack of children, which delighted in passing on some household gossip, as well as of-old women, whose verbal bawdiness was in marked contrast to the customary verbal restraint of the men on sexual matters.

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I chose to stay in one community and to benefit from the intimacy

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that such an identification gives one. Had I chosen to move from one sib to another I would have had a better account of the formal principles of social structure but at the expense of a knowledge of the patterns of cultural life. My choice of the *Bahúkiwa* among all the Cubeo sibs was partly, as I have explained, fortuitous, but the site, halfway up the Cuduiarí, had its advantages in giving me some command of events along the entire river.

The reader, however, will understand that this study has a special perspective. Although I have made some effort to present "Cubeo," the point of view is unavoidably that of the *Bahúkiwa*, a low-ranking sib and perhaps even an alien sib of probable Macú ancestry. Strictly speaking, a Cubeo perspective can be only an artificial composite pieced together and generalized from the distinctive perspectives of each of its principal sibs. I would imagine that the Cubeo presented from the point of view of the *Hehénewa*, a high-ranking sib, would bring out somewhat more emphasis upon social status and upon the authority of the headman. One wonders how the Cubeo would appear if studied from the point of view of those of its sibs now along the Querarí that were once Arawakan-speaking, or if studied from the point of view of those Cubeo-speaking sibs that now form one of the phratries of the Tucano tribe.

The theoretical position of a study is best understood from what the writer does with the material. What he claims to be doing with it is far less important. My own theoretical viewpoint will emerge from the text and more explicitly from the final summation or conclusion. At this point it should be sufficient to say that my purpose is to present the Cubeo in terms of fundamental principles of social structure and in terms of basic cultural patterns. I have chosen a level of description and of analysis that lies between the idiosyncratic and the universal. The detailed account of person and of personal reaction is an example of the idiosyncratic, and the analysis of a culture as an apparatus for the satisfaction of "basic human needs" is an example of the universal. The idiosyncratic and the universal approaches are pancultural. One deals with individual responses that can occur in any society, the other deals with cultural functions that are true of all societies. The level of description chosen here is intended to set the Cubeo apart as a particular social and cultural type and yet to allow bases for cross-cultural comparison with other societies on its cultural level.

Finally, it is necessary to say that this study is incomplete. It had been my hope to do a restudy. When this hope did not seem realizable it was obviously better to submit an incomplete report on the Cubeo than not to submit one at all.

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coitus. First building a small fire, the couple bathes; they have coitus and bathe again. The ancestral spirits add power to the water, that promotes pregnancy. Because of its connubial use the canoe landing is thus a sanctuary of another kind, at night restricted to those who are going to use it for the proper purpose. When the last married couple has left, the young men take over. They bathe off the canoe landing, sounding the ancestral trumpets that have been hidden somewhere along the river bank. Regular bathing with the horns gives strength and sexual potency.

People arise for the day's activities sometime before dawn. Thereafter, the canoe landing is the scene of secular activity, women and girls drawing water, men readying their canoes for fishing, and the young play pack frolicking. In the high heat of the day the women return from their manioc gardens to bathe and refresh themselves. In effect, there is a secular and a sacred period in canoe landing activities. The secular part of the day is from dawn to a tropical four o'clock in the afternoon, when the first guests may be expected to arrive if there is a drinking party or a ceremony. The sacred part is from after four o'clock until dawn. Even on ordinary days, activities slacken at the river by late afternoon. On ceremonial days the distinction of a sacred and a secular period holds strongly.

BOUNDARIES

The clearing delimits the effective area of habitation, but not the full area of a community. This territory runs along a stretch of river and is usually demarcated by a *caño* or creek. On the Cuduiarí these small tributaries run into the main stream at almost regular intervals. A principal habitation is ordinarily along the main stream, which is the preferred site. However, the requirements of slash-burn horticulture necessitate a periodic circulation allowing for three to five years at each site. Depending upon the particular conformation of the land with respect to the danger of flooding, a community may be able to move along the banks of the main stream, preparing its new clearing adjacent to the old. It may, on the other hand, be forced to move up a *raño*, with its connotation of lower status. If it is required to spend a period in a *caño*, it has a cyclical existence, of being in a relatively poor state when it is off the main stream and returning to an epigone when it re-establishes itself on the main stream. When I came to live among the *Bahúkiwa* they had just come from a *caño* phase and were in an expansive mood at having moved onto the Cuduiarí proper again. *Caño* dwellers are self-conscious; they enter-

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at a distance from the water and is kept sanitary by action of the sun. The dump receives the body wastes of the very young children.

THE MALOCA

The maloca (*kenámi*) is no mere shelter or sleeping barracks. It is a vital social center, the very focus of social and religious life. Under its great gabled roof all ceremony takes place, the dead are buried, food is prepared, and almost all implements and articles of use are manufactured. The Cubeo are largely an indoor people. Children play outside and there are occasions when the older men sit on the plaza in the shade of the house. But in the main, adults spend their leisure time indoors, lounging in hammocks. Guests are received at the doorway of the house, the hosts standing always within, in the formal exchange of greetings. Having been welcomed at the door, guests are ushered to low benches set at an angle near the doorway and facing inward.

When I came among the *Bahúkiwa* they were on the upswing, having come from a creek site to the main stream. In the new site they had put up several smaller houses and the framework of a large 12-compartment maloca was in place. This large house, of standard size, was 75 feet long, 35 feet wide, and 21 feet high. The eaves of the hip roof extended six feet past the low side walls. The new house is always the work of the headman. It is started on his initiative and the work is carried on with his active encouragement and under his direction. The leadership qualities of a headman are precisely reflected in the maloca, in its size and in the care that is taken in its construction. The headman is known as *kenámi upákũ* (owner of the house). The house is his, in the sense that one who is not willing to accept the authority of the headman will not live in the house. A house, the Cubeo believe, cannot tolerate dissension. Whatever the genealogical relationships of its residents, they are the equivalent of a joint family. The Cubeo are decidedly uncomfortable if the atmosphere of a house is lacking in familial warmth. If necessary, they will overlook discourtesy, uncooperativeness, and sullenness in the expectation that such behavior will be only a passing phase. Nevertheless, they are acutely sensitive to one another's moods and before too long one sullen individual will have infected them all. Then someone will move out and all sense the impending dissolution of their community. The smaller house that will now be built alongside does not remove the source of dissaffection. It stands rather as a reminder that they have not been able to get along with one another. The headman is

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226 554 Yet a leader of a fishing party may, indeed, ask an elder to come along as an expert. The fact is that expertness is very casually shared, as each fisherman narrates at the end of a day what he accomplished and how he accomplished it.

226 796 [251] [417] [614] [237] After a great catch, fish are dried and smoked for several days on wooden racks set up outside the house. The entire sib gathers, each man selects a dried fish, mounts it on a stick, and dances with it. The dancers wear a headdress of splints that is shaped to resemble a fish basket and is called *nyukáro*, and also carry dance staffs decorated with feathers of the great fishing birds, the heron and the river eagle. They sing songs (*máopwa*) honoring the fish. There may be as many as four or five such festivals during the course of the year. I was told the greatest come when the winter rains have stopped. After the dance they feast on the fish. Curiously, I never witnessed this fish festival, called simply *upañeteno* (festival). The Indians explained that they only have the festival when they are in the mood. The dance is not intended to increase the supply of fish.

[N4]

226 484 Not all communities were as well situated for fishing as were those of the Cuduiarí, a well-stocked stream. Other tribes in the area often used distant streams, camping out for long periods of time, living on fish and preserving some of the catch for use at home. Koch-Grünberg, in his travels, encountered many Indians far from home, fishing strange streams (1909, II, 27 ff.). On the Cuduiarí the problem of shortage was felt mainly by the upstream communities at the very bottom of the dry season. These people, however, were then free to fish along unoccupied stretches of the Cuduiarí, camping out or accepting the hospitality of phratry mates for fishing sites and for shelter. If they went to another stream it was generally to the sites of in-laws, where they also had hospitality rights. Thus, kinship, including the affinal and the maternal ties, provides a completely reliable mechanism for interchange of territorial resources.

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HUNTING

224 [462] Hunting is a secondary masculine pursuit. Whereas every adult male is a fisherman not all are hunters. Hunting attracts naturally the most vigorous age groups, men in their late teens to about 30, although there are no age restrictions that would bar an old man from joining a hunting party. Hunting may have been more prominent in the past, when only native weapons, spears and blowguns using curare-tipped darts, were fashionable. Today the Indians hunt with muzzle-loading shotguns that only a few possess because of the ex-

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pense and trouble. A hunter is not disposed to take risks with his small store of shot, powder, and percussion caps, and, since a man does not like to return empty-handed, a hunting party is formed only when its organizer is reasonably certain of success. As in any collective undertaking, any man who wishes to may join a hunting party. However, most parties that I have observed consisted of blood brothers or other sibmates who habitually hunted together. Hunters, of necessity, have a strong feeling for teamwork. The Cubeo are excellent marksmen, cool and courageous.

The big game is the tapir (*wekú*), who is awaited at a salt lick near a small stream. The tapir follows a customary route to the salt lick, arriving quite late in the afternoon. He has worn a trail as deep as a ditch in the soft earth. Among the maze of these deep pathways fresh tracks and fresh dung are the signs of current use. A man who has seen fresh tracks reports it. The hunters go out to kill a particular tapir who has already been observed, so that they may speak of him in personal terms.

Communities differ in hunting customs. Some use dogs to chase the animal through the forest. The *Bahúkiwa* method, which seemed quite successful, was to rendezvous with the tapir at his salt lick. The Indians are fond of tapir flesh, which is tender and tasty. I participated in only one tapir hunt with the *Bahúkiwa*. A large female was killed, toward dusk, as she nibbled on salted earth. We camped nearby, spending a good part of the night eating spit-broiled steaks and cutting up the animal for transportation home. The limbs came as entire pieces, and the rest of the flesh was cut into strips and neatly packaged in palm leaves. The men were very gay. They amused themselves by inserting sticks into the tapir's vagina. As the animal had been killed in the territory of another sib we stopped at the sib house and, as is customary, gave away about half the meat. The *Bahúkiwa* hunters were pleased at the opportunity to display both generosity and evidence of success. The remainder of the flesh was distributed at the home sib, each hunter making a personal presentation of a portion of meat. The Cubeo utilize nothing but the flesh of the tapir.

Hunting, in summary, is a distinctive pursuit and marks one for prominence. An aspirant for the headmanship is ordinarily a hunter. He pleases the community because he enlivens the diet and has surrendered some of his leisure in its behalf. In a special category is the hunter of the dreaded jaguar. Such a man is interested in sport and in prestige. The jaguar hunter may be solitary or he may invite a few close friends to accompany him. He brings home the hide for a

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462 simple basket is often a matter of several weeks. Every man has at
461 his side, so to speak, a number of unfinished objects which he hopes to get at before too long.

462 The sexual division of labor in manufactures is rather firmly main-
323 tained. I learned of few objects in use that were not made by a member of the proper sex. Young men are drawn to pottery making, but they may handle clay in a playful manner only. They make pots and dishes in strange shapes, working rather expertly. Such dishes are given to children as toys and are soon destroyed. Children, boys and girls, play with clay, making small animal or human figures and quickly destroying them. No permanent clay figures are ever made. Serious pottery work is an annual affair, undertaken by the women when the falling river has exposed the clay banks. All at once the women working together renew the household ceramic ware.

342 Manufacture is most often a group activity, and like all group ac-
[461] tivities is regarded by the Indians as a pleasurable recreation. The
[476] exception to this rule is perhaps housebuilding, which is often strenuous. Even then, when the exertion of the task has broken the spell of good feeling, the men stop and turn to another task. A large maloca can be a very long time in building. Among the *Bahúkiwa* a house begun when I arrived was not yet complete when I left almost a year later. A house must be built by a group working together not only for technical reasons, but in obedience to the principle that all who are going to live in it must work on it.

Building the communal house is a major technical and social enterprise. It tests the capabilities of the headman and the morale of the community. The true maloca is a solid structure built with great care, skill, and concern for details. Temporary houses may be slipshod in construction, but when a house is slipshod it is either clearly designated as temporary or it will be a cause of shame. Every
342 part of the house is built with the greatest care, but nothing reveals
284 more clearly the Cubeo concern for combining structural integrity and aesthetic design than the lashings that hold all the materials together. The most conspicuous lashings are those that bind the main beams. The builders start with temporary house posts and with temporary lashings. Finally, when the entire structure is in place, an expert lasher goes over the entire inner structure, replacing the beams and rebinding them in a consistent pattern, using carefully chosen
342 lianas. The Cubeo are painstaking in all crafts, but the maloca is
[114] their supreme creation. I was able to observe almost every stage in
[461] the construction of a maloca among the *Bahúkiwa*. I do not recall that a single bundle of roofing thatch was laid under pressure or

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The Sib

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The Cubeo sib is a unilineal descent group whose members regard themselves as being descended from common ancestors but cannot establish an actual genealogical relationship. Sibs are named, normally localized, exogamic, patrilineal, and patrilocal. They are bound into unnamed exogamic phratries within which they occupy an order of rank that expresses the sequence in which they emerged during their mythical first emergence. Sib members claim descent from the male of an ancestral brother-sister pair. Each sib bears a name that in some cases is the name of the sib founder, but in any case is the name of an Ancient, that is, an early ancestor. The first ancestors are called *Bekũpwänwa* (the Ancients). The sib is the center of the social structure, the focus and regulator of all main social, religious, and economic activities. It is the only true political unit since only a sib has a headman. A person's identification is only by sib. The strongest feeling that the Cubeo have for the sib is that it is a family in which the males show the strongest solidarity because they are the ones who live permanently together. The women never lose their sib identity, and when a married woman returns home, as a widow, divorced, or with a husband in tow, she may take up a position in the sib that is sociologically equivalent to that of a male head of household. She takes her place in the informal council of household heads and takes her turn in giving drinking parties to her sibmates.

[615] [622] [114]

Since my study of the Cubeo sib system is incomplete, being based on information from a few sibs only, the principles of sib nomen-

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clature can only be hinted at and not definitely established. One principle, that of eponymy, seems to hold for sibs of high social standing. But my information on this point is limited to only one of the phratries. In this phratry, composed of sibs along the Cuduiarí and the Vaupés, the two top-ranking sibs bear the names of Ancients who were the very first men to emerge from the traditional emergence site. The founders of the *Órobawa* and of the *Aúnbwawü* were, respectively, *Órobakü* and *Aúnkü*.[1] These men, it is said, named all the other sibs of the phratry that emerged after they did. I could not discover the source of these names. They may have been from the genealogical list of the two top-ranking sibs, in accordance with the current principle that when a new sib is adopted into the phratry the adopting or sponsoring sib endows its members with names from its own genealogical list. However, Cubeo traditions suggest diverse origins for the sibs so that it is unlikely that a single principle will explain the sib names.

The first ancestors of the sibs, other than the top-ranking two, had names that were not the same as the sib names. The founder of the *Bahúkiwa*, for example, was *Bwü* (Agouti) and the founder of the *Hehénewa* was *Djurédo*, but later Ancients took as personal names the sib name itself, thus establishing in subsequent generations the principle of eponymy. In later generations, *Bahúkü* becomes a leading *Bahúkiwa* Ancient and *Hehénakü* a leading *Hehénewa* Ancient. Any Ancient may also be referred to generically by the sib name, so that one may speak of a specific *Bahúkü* or *Bahúko*[2] or of a generalized *Bahúkü* or *Bahúko*, meaning in the latter instance an Ancient man or woman of the *Bahúkiwa* sib.

A proper sib name must have some eponymous quality. Some sib names are descriptive, such as *Mánapwänwa*, meaning "Trail People," a derogatory reference to people who arrived on the Cuduiarí overland like the Macú instead of decently along the river by canoe. These people reject this name in favor of a subsib name which has the orthodox merit of having been bestowed by the founders of the phratry. Cubeo sib names are normally descriptive only insofar as personal names are descriptive. The legendary method by which the first sibs got their names from a higher-ranking source stands for the Cubeo as the model by which newcomers are brought into the phratry. An adopted sib is given a name that has in its stem the name of the adopting sib. All the sibs of the *Hehénewa* are differentiated by a descriptive prefix, while the sibs of the *Bahúkiwa* are differen-

[1] There is a full list of sibs following the present discussion.
[2] The suffix *kü* is masculine, *ko* is feminine.

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to the true emergence site of Uaracapurí, where they were received by the *Órobawa*, who bestowed upon them the name *Hehénewa*. This version would account for Koch-Grünberg's information that the *Hehénewa* are also known as *Ólaba-Hehénewa*. Another version suggests a closer relationship by making the point that the *Hehénewa* had wanted to emerge in the same place with all the others of the phratry, but because other sibs were hostile to them they came out instead at the Papurý and then journeyed to join their kin. A third version is simply that the *Hehénewa* and *Bahúkiwa* were once alien groups that joined into a confederation after the *Hehénewa* had befriended the *Bahúkiwa*.

The theme of hostility in the *Hehénewa* emergence was explained by informants in the following way. The first people were very fierce and those that came out of the emergence hole wanted to prevent others from emerging. The *Órobawa*, having come out first, made a hole for the others to come out of. Those they willingly allowed to come out formed with them one group. Those that came out despite opposition formed another. Subsequently both divisions were rejoined.

The *Pedíkwa*, a branch of the *Hehénewa*, also tell that they had been prevented by the hostility of the other sibs from emerging at Uaracapurí and so they emerged at the Papurý. They came out in the form of a single anaconda who cut himself into many parts, each of which became a parakeet (*kúdjuru*). The parakeets flew about looking for food and settled at a lagoon at *Yaibabü* near the Mitú *igarapes*, an affluent of the upper Cuduiarí. After a time, they cut a path through the forest and arrived at *Pediwa*, a rock on the Cuduiarí where they built a house and became the *Pedíkwa*. A more honorific version of this tale that the *Pedíkwa* also tell is that, having come to *Pediwa*, the site of a major rapids on the Cuduiarí, they re-emerged. Since, they insist, they had never taken human form until they had re-emerged at *Pediwa*, they feel justified in claiming that rapids as a true emergence site and they have the distinction, therefore, of now residing, as does the *Órobawa* head sib, at an original emergence site. An unknown people, the tradition relates, had been living at *Pediwa*, now known as *Toídibü*. (Painted rocks – petroglyphs) but moved away when the *Pedíkwa* re-emerged.

The *Bahúkiwa* explain their relationship to the *Hehénewa* as follows: *Bwü* (Agouti), the Ancient of the *Bahúkiwa*, was leading his people from the Vaupés up into the Cuduiarí when they encountered the *Byarí-Hehénewa*, a now extinct subsib of the *Hehénewa*. They fought and all the *Bahúkiwa* were killed except for one boy, who

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614 time and then have drawn to them new sibs from peoples speak-
619 ing the same as well as other languages. The Cubeo tribe, as we have
174 already observed, seems to be an aggregate of Tucanoan-speaking, Arawakan-speaking, and "Macuan"-speaking peoples. A particular sib that belongs to one tribe today may incorporate itself into another tomorrow.

614 It is possible that sib formation in the Northwest Amazon region
174 has been an outgrowth of this process of repeated assimilation of new groups. The reasoning behind this assumption is as follows: patrilocal extended families need only assert and maintain a tradition of common origin and then live up to the requirement of maintaining a firm group identity, within a confederation, to make the transition to sib or clan. The suggestion is, however, that sib formation cannot be accounted for merely by the growth of extended patrilocal families or by the enlargement of lineages — because of the ease of fission — but rather as a response to quite another process, that of confederation in which the identity of the joining segments is retained. A confederation of descent groups heightens the probability that all will defend their autonomy by asserting their identity of common descent.

THE SIB AND PHRATRIC ORGANIZATION

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615 The sibs are listed in approximate order of rank. This rank order
554 should be considered as provisional, since it represents mainly the
361 *Bahúkiwa* view of sib rank.

PHRATRY 1

Órobawa The leading sib; they still live at Uaracapurí on the Vaupés, the site of a rapids from which they first emerged. Their first male ancestor was called *Órobakü*. According to one version of the origin tale, he was the head of the anaconda from which all Cubeo are descended. He then named all the sibs of the phratry that followed after him. Koch-Grünberg identified them as *Ólaba-Hehénewa* and hence as a branch of the *Hehénewa*. Nimuendajú listed them as *Órobawa*. According to my information, they are most closely linked with the *Hwáni-Hehénewa* and with the *Aúnuwa*, the easternmost or most downstream community of the Cubeo.

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Aúnbawakü The second sib, occupying the next site upstream on the Vaupés at Urania. Their first ancestor was *Aúnkü*. Some informants said that *Aúnkü* was the last to emerge but was granted second place by *Órobakü*. In any case, their position on the Vaupés gives them second rank. They are regarded as very closely linked with the *Hehénewa*. In 1940 they were reduced to four households. Some had taken up residence

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at Pindaíva on the Cuduiarí. Nimuendajú's reference to the *Ambo-mamára* on the Cuduiarí, whom he did not visit personally, may refer to this Cuduiarí group. The Vaupés group is not mentioned in either his or Koch-Grünberg's lists.

Hehénewa In the present social structure, the *Hehénewa* represent the largest grouping of sibs of this phratry. From the traditions, it is not unlikely that the *Hehénewa* were once an independent tribe which joined with other groups to form the present phratry. When Koch-Grünberg visited them in 1903 he came to regard them as the "true" Cubeo. They have, even today, the highest prestige on the Cuduiarí and are, to my knowledge, the only group on this river authorized to wear the quartz cylinder pendant. According to native traditions, they came originally from the Papurý River and were not Cubeo but Tucano, known as the *Xwéve-Hehénewa* or *Toucan-Hehénewa*. Their origin site on the Papurý is known as *Wahúdja impemáni*. They were adopted into the phratry by the *Órobawa*. The story goes that the *Hehénewa* heard the *Órobawa* sounding the ancestor trumpets. They were attracted by the music – a sign of kinship – and when they came close they were adopted. Another version of the tradition emphasizes the close kinship of the *Hehénewa* with the other Cubeo sibs that emerged at Uaracapurí. This notes that the *Hehénewa* had the intention of emerging at the traditional site but were prevented from doing so by the hostility of others. Therefore they emerged at a distance and came to join their rightful kinsmen later. The *Hehénewa* now occupy sites all along the Cuduiarí, but are concentrated at the lower Cuduiarí and have a maloca on the Vaupés near Urania close by the *Aúnbwawü*.

Byá-Hehénewa A subsib of the *Hehénewa* who live at the mouth of the Cuduiarí.

Wathariwa The *Bahúkiwa* regard them as distant members of the phratry, linking them rather more closely with the *Hehénewa* and the *Aúnbwawü*. They emerged at *Byáiankwe*, a rapids on the Vaupés. Their first Ancient was called *Kwábebo*. They still live on the Vaupés at *Uacurúwa*, near Tatú *cachoeira*, and at *Umarí* just below. Koch-Grünberg located them above Uaracapurí falls, an upstream location more appropriate to their standing in the phratry.

Byá-Wathariwa A subsib of the *Wathariwa* on the Vaupés.

Urérariwa Perhaps a subsib of the *Wathariwa* on a small stream of the Vaupés.

Bahúkiwa They list their emergence site as *Impenáni* on the Uaracapurí falls of the Vaupés. Their first Ancient was *Barü* and his sister was *Onpwéndoko*. They now consist of several subsibs occupying sites along the middle Cuduiarí. Koch-Grünberg referred to them as *Bahúna* and identified them as a Macú group (*Borówa*) who wandered into the Cuduiarí and became fully assimilated into the Cubeo, giving up their original language. *Bahúkiwa* traditions do, indeed, refer to an episode in the history of the sib when, having been virtually wiped out by an enemy raid, the last survivors married *Borówa* women and so regenerated the sib. They deny any imputation, however, that they were ever low-caste *Borówa*. The term Macú, which is the colloquial form of *Borówa*, is commonly used in the region as an epithet.

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associated with the *Kompainyewa*. Koch-Grünberg found them on the left bank of the Vaupés at a site called *Naibü*, where they were known in the *lingoa geral* as *Tokandira-Tapuyo*. He recorded their self-name as *Olá-Piarãwa*. Nimuendajú incorrectly placed them on the Cuduiarí.

Pyéndo-Hehénewa A dissident sib of the *Hehénewa* group, maintaining no friendly relations with the other *Hehénewa*. Their close sib ties are with the *Pedikwa* and the *Kenánikauwü*. They occupy several sites above Patú at the headwaters of the Cuduiarí, the main maloca being at Querarí *miri* (*Enpanáwe*). They are also at *Abúhudjo* on the Yurupari *miri* and are known also as *Pyéndokauwü*.

Hwáni-Hehénewa A *Hehénewa* subsib on the Vaupés at Paraná *picuna* and at Tukano *cachoeira*. Their origin site is *Impenáni* of the Uaracapuri *cachoeira* and they are, therefore, closely related to the *Órobawa* and the *Aúnwewa*, in contrast to the *Hehénewa* proper, whose emergence was actually on the Papury.

Aúnwewa A subsib of the *Aúnbuwawü* on the Vaupés at *Upyaria* just above Mitú. Nimuendajú incorrectly placed them on the Cuduiarí and referred to them as *Aweéa*. They are also listed as a sib of a Tucano phratry. [114]

Kompainyewa Closely linked with the *Piarãwa*, they live at Pindaíva on the Vaupés just above Urania near the Yurupari falls. Their emergence site, however, is Uaracapuri.

Abáxo-Hehénewa A sib on the upper Querarí mentioned by Koch-Grünberg, on which I have no information.

Ambomamára A sib on the Cuduiarí mentioned by Nimuendajú, on which I have no information. From the name it would appear to be a subsib of the *Aúnbuwawü*.

Byarí-Hehénewa An extinct subsib of the *Hehénewa*, who had lived on the Cuduiarí as well as at Uarúa Lake on the upper Vaupés. They were also known as *Byaridowa*.

Papuli-Hehénewa A sib living on the Cuduiarí during the time of Koch-Grünberg's visit at Suriburoca but now extinct. They came from the Papurý and were closely linked with the Tucano tribe of the Tiquié River.

Kenámbuwawa A sib on the upper Cuduiarí, presumably a subsib, along with the *Kenánikauwü*, of the *Pedikwa*.

Phratry 1 consists of two divisions that represent distinct origins. 615 In the past these two divisions may have been intermarrying, because 554 even now, although the entire phratry is exogamic, informants dis- 614 agree as to the proprieties of intermarriage between the two divisions. The dominant division from the point of view of prestige and of numbers is known as *Yavímanawa* (Children of the jaguar) and includes the *Órobawa*, *Aúnbuwawü*, *Hehénewa*, *Wathariwa*, and their subsibs: *Byá-Hehénewa*, *Byá-Wathariwa*, *Pedikwa*, *Kenánikauwü*, *Utciwaiwa*, *Pyéndo-Hehénewa*, *Hwáni-Hehénewa*, and *Aúnwewa*. The second division has no name and consists of the *Bahúkiwa* groups, the *Piarãwa*, and the *Kompainyewa*.

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same people, or possibly a subsib, since I have in my lists an unidentified *Kowétarabawũ* on the Querarí.

Yániwa A sib at the mouth of the Querarí. Nimuendajú also noted them on the Querarí as *Dyaniwa*.

Yokókũbewũ A sib on the lower Querarí.

UNIDENTIFIED SIBS

Batóua Koch-Grünberg found them at the mouth of the Cubiú *igarapes*, a tributary of the Vaupés, and called them a small "horde" that had come from the Querarí. I did not hear of them. Nor are they mentioned by Nimuendajú.

Ilhéadoua A group mentioned by Koch-Grünberg and later by Nimuendajú, but not on my lists. Nimuendajú says they were once Macú and placed them on the Cuduiarí, which he did not explore, but which Koch-Grünberg and I did. Koch-Grünberg did not locate them on the Cuduiarí, but recorded a visit of some from Puranga *parand* on the Vaupés to the *Hehénewa* of the Cuduiarí.

Káua A Cubeo group whom Koch-Grünberg encountered on the upper Aiarí. They lived in a maloca at Yurupari *cachoiera*. The Siusi called them *Maulieni*. They were, said Koch-Grünberg, originally Arawakans from the Querarí and then became Cubeo-speaking. Since moving to the Aiarí near the Siusi they have returned to the use of Arawakan. They are closely related to the *Djurémawa*, but they are not in my lists.

THE BORÓWA

The *Borówa*, who are more generally known as Macú, were once servants or menials of various sibs of the Cubeo. This is no longer the case since, as many Cubeo informants said, the *Borówa* came to be too troublesome and they were allowed to leave. There was fear of *Borówa* sorcery and that was another reason for sending them away. The Cubeo say that the *Borówa* had come to them voluntarily and offered to work for them in return for food, shelter, and protection against enemies. Individual household heads took in individual *Borówa* or a man and wife pair. The *Borówa* did all the everyday work. They fished, their women worked in the manioc garden, they fetched water and firewood. They lived in the house with the Cubeo and were to all intents and purposes members of the household. They even made their own chicha. The Cubeo claim they did not intermarry with *Borówa*, although this statement is belied by a sib tradition that the *Bahúkiwa* were once given *Borówa* wives. The view is that it was improper to marry such lowly people. One man not very long ago had eight *Borówa* men and women attached to his household.

Once the practice of keeping *Borówa* had become established, they

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PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

593 604 [601] The Cubeo distinguish between father and father's brothers, but do not distinguish between mother and mother's sisters. The term *bakūdyó* means "like a father." [2] This distinction conveys rather precisely the actualities of the relationship. Relations between fathers and sons (the daughters are linked in household duties with the mother) are intimate, and one important sign of intimacy is the privilege that a youngster has of taking food from his father before it is brought into the maloca or into the individual household. Boys value this privilege enormously when they are preadolescent. Without a father a boy will be fed by his father's brother but will lack this privilege with food that he had with his own father. The relationship between paternal uncle and nephew is a strongly supportive one, but with restraint in it. A boy does not take or handle objects belonging to his father's brother without permission. With his father's possessions he has the same freedom as with the possessions of his sibmates of his own generation.

593 601 604 [587] [595] Parents and children share an exclusive set of kinship terms and thereby set themselves apart from the fraternal joint family. Even though mother and mother's sister are equated, a woman distinguishes, as does her husband, between her own and her sister's children. The equation of mother and mother's sister is normal clan usage in a classificatory system. Among the Cubeo, this equation is not related either to the sororate or to sororal polygyny. It would seem to correspond rather to the principle of generalizing relationships that are less important and differentiating very sharply relationships that are most important. With respect to the term for "mother," this is not to say that the actual relationship between children and mother lacks real importance, but only that from the point of view of patriliny of the sib the incoming females, such as mothers, are less important. Actually, the feeling for one's own mother is very strong, not only on the part of the daughters but on the part of the sons too. In a polygynous household the sons of the same mother share a close link with one another; and as we have

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[2] Koch-Grünberg, who stayed with a *Hanóroa* group at the mouth of the Cuduiarí, reported that father and father's brother were equated, as were mother and father's sister (1909, II, 8a). Since he did not use the genealogical method it is likely that he was in error with respect to both reported usages. The equation of mother with father's sister controverses, of course, the patriliny of the sib. On the other hand, the grouping of father and father's brother is conceivable since the distinction between *bakū* and *bakūdyó* is not great for the Cubeo. In calling attention to this difference of information I should add that the nature of the Cubeo tribe is such that variations in minor usages are perhaps to be expected.

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593 to his father for personal attention. On the whole, a child is at a greater disadvantage if it has lost a parent of its own sex, that is, a girl with a stepmother, a boy with a stepfather. A girl with a stepmother has a hard life of chores and of open neglect. A boy with a stepfather does not have a hard life at all in the material sense. He is deprived more subtly of intimacy with a paternal figure, and this usually shows itself in his own reserve with respect to his fellows. If he has no father at all the effect upon his personality is even more marked.

593 736 [597] My direct acquaintance with the situation of a true orphan is limited to the observation of one case among the *Bahúkiwa*. This was a girl from another tribe who had lost both parents and was adopted by the *Bahúkiwa* headman as his "daughter." The little girl, about nine, was addressed as "daughter" but held the status in the household of a servant. She took on the heaviest chores and was almost never free to play. Her lowly status was truly stigmatized by [301] her lack of possessions. She was the only child among the Cubeo [123] whom I had ever seen unadorned, until I gave her a necklace which she was allowed to keep. The children of the household enjoyed beating her as a way of teasing her, rather than wickedly. She took their pinchings and cuffings good-naturedly, on the whole, and had learned to pretend not to notice. Once, in the presence of the headman, her "father," the children were overdoing their teasing. She looked imploringly at the headman. Finally, she caught his eye and he said to her, "It is all right for you to run away." He saw no need to reprimand his own children.

● [114] In reading Giacone (1939) on the Tucano tribe I found my observations on orphans corroborated. He, too, reported that orphans do not lack food but that they appear to be melancholy.

CEREMONIAL FRIENDSHIP

572 193 A parallel to the brother-sister relationship is the *hikū-hiko* relationship, a ceremonial friendship. These terms, formed by combining the possessive prefix with the gender suffix, connote a relationship of exceptional closeness. The linguistic significance of possessive prefix and gender suffix for kinship terms has already been brought out. The curious feature of *hikū* and *hiko* is that these terms are composed of the two intimate-indicating particles.[8] The ceremonial

[8] *Hi* is also the verb stem "to give," but if *hikū* were translated as "giver"—a feasible rendering—it should be possible to say *hihikū*. But this form does not exist.

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marriage. These suspicions are not overcome even though they may already have affinal kin in the other tribe.

Among the *Bahúkiwa*, I was witness to some of the events of the full cycle of an exchange marriage involving the neighboring Tucanoan-speaking *Tatúyo*. The opening wedge for this marriage was made by a *Bahúkiwa* woman who had married a *Tatúyo*. One day she reappeared among the *Bahúkiwa* with her husband and young children and settled down for a long wait. She was given a manioc garden and her husband devoted himself to making household implements for the wife of the headman. The headman had two marriageable daughters and two marriageable sons, to each of whom had been assigned, in the traditional manner, a sister whom he would exchange for a bride. One of the daughters, the elder, was very attractive, vivacious, flirtatious, and ardently desired by many young men. She had been married and divorced several times and was accused of having aborted, or killed at birth, several of her offspring. Because she was headstrong and not very industrious, sober-minded folk regarded her as a poor choice for a bride. Nevertheless, she was assigned to the older son, a very capable young man who showed every promise of becoming a headman. By seniority his was to be the prior marriage. Among the Cubeo the problem is to have the sons marry in proper age sequence and not the daughters. The *Bahúkiwa* visitor stated her opinion that such a girl needed a *Tatúyo* as a husband. "A *Tatúyo* could tame her," she said. The *Tatúyo* indeed had a reputation for ferocity because at the time they were still at war with the whites. By contrast with the Cubeo, those I saw were sullen and certainly appeared to be far more aggressive. She added that the *Tatúyo* also had many fine young girls, girls who had not been spoiled by contact with whites. The headman had no sooner grasped the possibilities of such a marriage for his undisciplined older daughter than a party of *Tatúyo* appeared to visit their fellow *Tatúyo*, who, they remarked jokingly, had lived away for so long that they now thought of him as a *Bahúkiwa*. It was a "large" party of eight men of warrior age. They came in two canoes. They were quartered among the various households and they stayed for several weeks, showing great skill in hunting, fishing, and in making implements. No one spoke marriage; but the signs were soon evident in the flirtatiousness of the daughters of the headman and two of the *Tatúyo* youths. When the *Tatúyo* announced that they were now ready to go home, a drinking party was quickly arranged as a farewell. When the *Tatúyo* party had left, it was discovered that the younger daughter was missing and that the older sister, whose "elopement" was taken

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beat her "abductor" with sticks or with their bare hands. His own companions aid him, and if the girl is willing, they get to the canoe landing with no serious damage. This display of ceremonial violence satisfies two Cubeo doctrines, one that affinal sibs are "hostile" and the other that a woman will not leave her sib by her own volition but must be torn from it by brute force. There is also a third notion, namely, that a man be strong enough to capture a bride. I heard many accounts, perhaps apocryphal, of fainthearted striplings who could not bring home a bride. Such stories are often told to tease young bride seekers.

184 583 585 (114)

Father Giacone (1949, p. 21), who studied the Tucano tribe, reported no courtship and no marriage ceremony but did note forcible seizure of the bride. Father Giacone's information does suggest some variation in practice among the Tucano. There, the bride is not seized by the groom but by the groom's father, who has been accompanied by some men. They pretend they have come to purchase a canoe. In the midst of their visit for this purpose they carry off the girl and bring her home, unmolested, to the waiting groom. Often, he notes, this is the first time they have met. The girl is timid and retiring, he reports, and the women undertake to cheer her up by inviting her to accompany them on their labors. When the bride begins to work with satisfaction at all her tasks the marriage is considered settled. Some weeks later her parents come to reclaim her and the groom hides her. Her parents are given presents if she is unwilling to return home. At a later visit they repay with gifts of their own.

In general, Tucano and Cubeo marriage practices are alike; the most striking difference is in the fetching home of the bride. Cubeo notions of manhood would be offended at the notion that the father should bring a bride home for his son.

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Among the Cubeo, the early stages of marriage are almost invariably difficult for the young couple. They are barely acquainted and the husband is expected to show his wife only the barest semblance of affection so as not to interfere with his mother, whose role it is to assimilate the young bride into her household as a replacement for the "lost daughter." The bride enters her mother-in-law's service, working with her in the manioc garden and in the preparation of manioc. Doing all the chores that she has done as an unmarried girl in her own community but under a strange woman, she is understandably disappointed, even though she is received very warmly. She is immediately locked in a conflict with her mother-in-law for her freedom. The issue is the manioc garden. A woman wants her daughter-in-law to help her in her garden and the daughter-in-law,

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Plural marriages are uncommon only because they are not convenient. Polygyny is usually limited to the headman. Two wives (I never heard of any man having more than two wives at the same time) are regarded as suitable for a headman, first because he has the personal qualities to sustain a complex household and second because the maloca will be more orderly if two women are responsible for looking after it. A headman's prospects for getting two wives are enhanced somewhat, since he will almost certainly have had a sister assigned to him as an exchange for his first wife, and his prestige and perhaps affluence will help him get a wife through bride price alone. Brother-sister exchange is preferred, to be sure, but circumstances are such that an enterprising man will find many other ways of getting an additional wife from among widows, divorcées, and orphan children. He will not, however, marry a woman, either widow or divorcée, who has been brought to his community as a wife by a sibmate. A man may well have a surplus sister. These opportunities are available to all men, but it is the headman who is most likely to seize upon them. Koch-Grünberg, noting the common occurrence of polygyny along the Vaupés, commented that plural marriages were harmonious. From what I observed and from what I heard I have a very different impression. Polygynous households are rather turbulent.

If a man has two wives, he must prepare two clearings and set each up in her own household. Even so, my informants told me, the wives quarrel and bear tales against one another to the husband, accusing one another of laziness. The first wife taunts her colleague as being a mere second wife. The second retorts that she would not have been chosen if the husband had really cared for the first wife. Since men take it for granted that women are an unruly element they expect wives to quarrel. A headman, however, should be able to manage them, it is believed.

One man told me that after he had married his present wife he was offered a girl for bride price alone – a shotgun and cloth – and so for three years he maintained a polygynous household. He then decided that it would not work. At first the new wife refused to garden and urged him to come and live at her sib. They did this for a time and he left his first wife at home with their children. After a year he returned with the second wife. He made a large clearing and divided it into two parts, assigning each to one wife. His first wife, he said, cultivated her part but the second did nothing and just sat about the house. One day she departed and he did not chase her. He claimed that he did not understand why she had left since he had not forced her to do anything she did not wish to do.

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622 the Cubeo headman is lacking in precisely those attributes that in
571 other parts of the world have traditionally played a prominent part
433 in political evolution.

622 The two terms, *habókü* and *kenámi upákü*, meaning, respectively,
554 a man of substance and "owner of the house," illustrate the conceptual range in Cubeo leadership. The *habókü* is the leader, whose presence, enhanced by a muscular physique, commands respect, who has undisputed skill in hunting, in fishing, in crafts, and who commands ceremonial lore. He possesses the full range of ceremonial regalia, feather headdresses, necklaces, and girdles. His equipment
[592] is of the best quality and in excellent condition. The *kenámi upákü*, on the other hand, is simply the head of the maloca. The *habókü* is apt to be head of the house, but a house head need not be *habókü*, although as a leader he will possess some *habókü* attributes. Thus
622 not all headmen qualify as *habókü*. Those of higher-ranking sibs,
614 such as the *Órabawa*, *Aúnbwawü*, and *Hehénewa*, usually do, and
554 those of lower-ranking sibs, such as the *Bahúkiwa*, usually do not. The existence of a concept of *habókü* is a spur to the ambition of a headman, although the status is honorific only. The *habókü* commands respect everywhere in the tribe, but his authority, such as it is, is limited to his own sib. Sibmen share in the prestige of having a *habókü* as headman. Not every *habókü* is the head of his sib, for in some sibs several men hold the title and their senior is then the head-
[709] man. In time of war the *habókü* is the natural war leader. Even when not headman his leadership is drawn upon in hunting and in all collective activities.

622 In the higher-ranking sibs the insignia of *habókü* include, first,
614 a quartz cylinder worn as a pendant, a jaguar-tooth girdle, an arma-
554 dillo-vertebrae girdle, and, finally, *mápena*, the ceremonial head-
301 dress of feathers and monkey hair. The *Bahúkiwa*, who are not
292 privileged to wear either the quartz pendant or the girdles, maintain that *mápena* are the principal insignia of *habókü* status among them, although they defer to the higher status of the insignia of their higher-ranking clans. The *Hehénewa* deride this *Bahúkiwa* claim and insist that without the pendant and girdles no man can call himself *habókü*. The *Bahúkiwa* define *habókü* as an achieved status and the *Hehénewa* as a hereditary status, but only in the sense that it pertains to high-ranking sibs. Within the proper sib any man may acquire the insignia and the status of *habókü*.[1]

[114] [565] [1] Apropos of social status, Martius (1867, I, 596) reported caste distinctions of chiefs, nobles, and commoners on the Vaupés. He gives no details. One suspects an exaggeration, although the bases for his view are understandable.

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There is much talk in the region about powerful chiefs, but no one has really seen one. In the past, the Indians say, there were chiefs over all the sibs along a river. Koch-Grünberg was told the same thing (1909, I, 264). One is also told that other people have powerful chiefs. I had no opportunity to investigate this, but Koch-Grünberg, who traversed all the main rivers in the region, was always told that the chiefs along another river were strong. The Desanas had only headmen, but they informed Koch-Grünberg that great chiefs ruled along the Papurý and Tiquié rivers. When he got there he found only headmen. If there has been a stronger political organization among the Cubeo in the past there is no suggestion of it now.

The fact is that leadership follows similar principles among all neighboring tribes from whom we have adequate information. Describing the Arawakan Siusi, Koch-Grünberg notes that the headmanship is a hereditary office, going from father to oldest son or to his younger brother. The headman himself passes on the office to someone in his line. His authority is minor and is concerned only with village affairs. It is based on the respect owed to age. The headman among the Siusi, he adds, is a representative, receiving guests and leading all community activities and discussions. He sees to it that the house is kept in order; and if he leaves for any length of time he turns the command over to his brother. He maintains order but he cannot punish. A headman who had long associated with the whites claimed authority over the entire river but no one took him seriously. Koch-Grünberg had the impression, however, that the oldest man in the maloca was the headman (1909, I, 68). This is not quite true among the Cubeo. The Cubeo respect age, but leadership, to repeat, depends upon ability to be a giver, so that a man who has gone too far past his prime is ordinarily ruled out as a headman.

LAW AND JUSTICE

With respect to the administration of justice and of order the headman is no magistrate. He is a mediator, a counselor, and often a persuasive advocate of his own views. It is the entire adult community that must reach a decison. The headman provides for orderly discussion until a decision is reached. Within the sib a primary objective of the headman's efforts is to smooth over difficulties, calm tempers, and restore the atmosphere of congeniality. There are, however, serious breaches of the peace, such as sorcery, persistent adultery, chronic and malicious theft of food, and murder when punishment is called for. In such cases the aim of the headman is not to calm

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754 694 To determine the guilty sorcerer an inquest is held around the hammock of the ill person, or of the deceased, as the case may be. All residents of the maloca gather and wait for the members of the victim's household to make the first charge. The charge is made and evidence is cited in terms of motive and of opportunity. The charge is either corroborated or refuted by any adult in the house, other names are mentioned, and the evidence is sifted. The entire discussion is conducted in a loud and angry tone of voice, and arms are brandished menacingly. Again, we are dealing with the principle [756] that a serious accusation can be made only in anger. The role of the medicine man in the inquest is usually limited to stating his diagnosis of sorcery. He may offer a clue that the sorcerer is a man [622] from afar or nearby but rarely does he name the culprit. The headman is usually the last to enter the discussion. He reviews all the evidence and presents his own verdict, which usually is, but need not be, accepted. After guilt has been established in this way, they decide how to act. It is not considered necessary to ask the accused if he can refute the charges.

WARFARE (*bwaino*)

721 People of intermarrying phratries often used to fight with one [615] another. It was less likely, however, for sibs that had recently ex- [614] changed wives to fight. Not too many years ago the *Djurémawa* from Querarí killed Hühû, an old *Bahükiwa* who was then living at Guaracú. The headman assembled ten men, who went to the Querarí, attacked a house of the *Djurémawa*, killed the occupants, and burned it down. The *Djurémawa*, it was explained, were on a plundering raid. When they killed Hühû and others in his house they carried off the young girls and even the chicha calabashes. One old man escaped to tell what had happened.

Small-scale raids of this sort were apparently common throughout the Vaupés. Most attacks were to seize women, and some were for [614] revenge. Sibs of opposite phratries feuded, and on one occasion a [648] *Hehénawa* sib fought an unsuccessful war for mastery of the Cuduiarí; but the main fear of attack came from alien tribes, Cariban, Arawakan, and, in particular, Tucanoan Desanas. The Desanas raided the Cuduiarí annually during the dry season, when they could move overland and escape detection. During every dry season war [114] alarms spread along the river and the communities are on the alert. [723] I witnessed one such alert. The dogs had given the alarm toward evening and since Desanas had been reported, a defense was pre-

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father blows into the milk, imparting to it his breath (*umé*), which is also his spirit. After several recitations a father's brother brings in *mihí*, in the proper ceremonial manner, tongue lolling and knees bent as though staggering under a great weight. All three drink the bitter brew and the recitation goes on. A naming ceremony I observed among the *Hehénewa* lasted two hours, beginning an hour before noon. It took place on the day of a mourning ceremony but before guests had arrived. The choice of the morning hours, I believe, is to establish the naming as strictly an in-sib affair. In the late afternoon there is a drinking party attended by all the sibs. In the *Hehénewa* case the mourning ceremony took the place of the drinking party. The ceremony concludes with bestowing the name, which is stated simply, "I give you the name ———, which was the name of ———." Then the grandfather blows into a small calabash of genipa with which the infant will be painted and into the calabash of milk. The child is induced to drink the milk. The grandfather now asks the child, "What name do you want?" Its father answers for it and the grandfather acknowledges it. The old man dips his index finger into the calabash of milk and presses it against the infant's heart "to make it grow." Then he asks the child, "What is your name?" The father answers for it. Finally, the old man touches the bridge of the child's nose and the ceremony is over. The bridge of the nose where it joins the forehead is the spot from which the soul will escape at death. By touching it the grandfather has left an opening for the soul to escape at the proper time.

Among the *Bahúkiwa* I had no opportunity to observe a naming ceremony, so the ceremony and the chants had to be described to me by informants. The ceremony as described and as I observed it among the *Hehénewa* was close to identical, but the *Bahúkiwa* chant and the *Hehénewa* chant differ, the latter having more clearly defined references to sib ancestors while the former is more definitely and directly a form of growth magic. In the *Bahúkiwa* chant there is only one reference to an ancestor and that is to a *Hehénewa* ancestor, *Urúhana* (Big one). My informants claimed they could not explain why they used a *Hehénewa* ancestor other than by the obvious reason that they had a right to claim an ancestor of the phratry. It may be, too, that the name, with its connotation of growth, has an irresistible appeal for the *Bahúkiwa*. The *Bahúkiwa* text given by informants is below, followed by the *Hehénewa*.

People of our soil
The milk that is from this place that causes to grow
People who are our offspring

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task. He is said to stretch the young girl's vagina until he can insert three fingers. He then announces, "You are a woman." The Cubeo say that if a girl should reach her first menstruation with her hymen intact coitus will ever after be painful for her and she will have difficulties during parturition. Digital defloration is a secret act; officially, the Cubeo credit the moon with the act. The moon copulates at night with a young girl and brings on her first menstruation. Thus, a prepubescent girl is referred to as *painwe bebiko* (one who has not yet copulated with the moon).

The pubescent girl (*pupüni*: one who is blown)[1] is said to be secluded for ten days behind screens at the rear of the house, taking nothing but cassava and water. She leaves the house to excrete, through a secret doorway in the side wall of the maloca so that she will not be seen by a man. She uses a scratching stick on her head or else her hair will turn white. Some said her hair would fall out. To develop a tender facial complexion she washes with a leaf that creates a lather and she covers her face with rubber latex and painfully pulls it off. She also pushes dried peppers up her nostrils until her skin burns red with irritation. The pain of this facial treatment is a parallel to the ordeal of the ants and the whipping endured by the boys, but the justification is different. A mother says to her daughter, "You have been accustomed to disobey me. Now let me see how much pain you can stand."

At the end of the ten days her mother paints her body with genipa and she goes to the river to bathe. In the evening a drinking party is held in the girl's honor and her mother pushes her forward to take part in the dances. The period of seclusion is an affair of the women and the men behave as though nothing unusual were going on.

When a *Bahükiwa* girl came of age during my stay among them she was sent to the house of her paternal grandmother nearby for proper seclusion. I was not allowed to go near the house and I did not see the girl until she had emerged again for the drinking party. Her hair had been cut short. I may have missed many details. Father Giacone, for example, reports that among the neighboring Tucano the shaman officiated at a girl's puberty isolation. He cut her hair short, burned the cuttings in a ritual manner, and then sent the girl to dispose of the ashes in the river.

After her first menstruation a girl is eligible for marriage but the change in her life is otherwise minor. She wears love charms and takes more care of her personal appearance. She is still attached to her mother's household.

[1] She is also known as *nominyaiwi* (becoming a woman).

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The only deaths I heard about or witnessed were all attributed to human sorcery so that I have no information on the Cubeo response to natural death or to death attributed to spirits. Mourning is extensive but does not impose unusually onerous duties or restrictions upon the survivors. Mourning goes through three phases. In the first, from the moment of death to burial, which follows quickly, the immediate kin and all sibmates yield to their spontaneous emotions, but up to a point, for the ritualization of emotion sets in quickly. In the second, which is the period from burial to the great mourning ceremony, the nearest female kin of the household – wife, mother, sister – accept the burden of mourning. Finally, in the third phase, the entire living cosmos of the Cubeo – people, Ancients, birds, beasts, fish, insects, and demons – join in the mourning. This third phase, an intricate ceremony, is described in a separate chapter. The dead, as already indicated, are buried beneath the dance floor of the house, emphasizing, it seems to me, the importance the Cubeo place on the house itself rather than upon mere locality.

I was present at the last hours of old João, a *Bahükiwa* and *bakūdyó* of the headman. He had been ill for several weeks, the medicine men had given up on him, and his death was, therefore, not unexpected. The Cubeo are not solicitous of the dying. Once its inevitability has been accepted death is awaited almost with indifference. Father Giacone (1949, p. 29), speaking for the neighboring Tucano, also observed that once the illness appears to be fatal the patient is given up for lost. Such patients, he adds, will be buried alive. When death seemed near – the old man was breathing with difficulty with a dry rasp – his wife took up the death watch at his hammock. At the moment of death her loud wailing awakened the house and all rushed to surround the hammock except the headman and his wife. Since it is the duty of the headman to preside over the inquest that follows upon the first outburst of grief he must plan upon a properly timed arrival. A shaman of another sib who was in the house also did not intrude upon the mourners, both in his role as shaman and as a sib outsider.

The old woman, truly grief-stricken, had embraced her dead husband's body in the hammock and rocked over it, moaning and wailing. She withdrew, however, when the younger brother of João arrived. He felt for the heartbeat and then covered the old man's face with some rags that had been the sick man's blanket. The women had all gathered to one side of the hammock and they wept continuously, chorusing the loud and emphatic wailing of the widow. The brother fetched his shotgun, moving slowly and grimly. He loaded

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the Ancients. In the naming and in the mourning ceremonies specific ancestors are invoked by name and by specific kinship reference, as the mother or the grandmother of the sib. In the case of postcoital connubial bathing the ancestors are not invoked either by name or by spell; the bathers merely participate in their magical presence in the river. Some cult activities are secret, others are not. The rule of secrecy applies to the flutes and trumpets. These bear the names of ancestors and may not be seen by women. However, whenever these instruments appear, a specific ceremonial role is assigned to the women. In the whipping rites, which are also initiation rites for boys, the women receive gifts of fruits and berries in the name of the Ancients. In the mourning rites the ancestor trumpets sound their notes of grief, to which the women respond with wailing of their own. That is, when the Ancients enter the maloca they naturally establish a relationship with the women of the house. On the other hand, when the Ancients' blessings are invoked, but without the ancestral presence, the women have no part in the proceedings. The women are ignored during the naming ceremony and during the recitation of the sib mythology. Basically, the ancestral cult belongs to the men. When the boys are shown the hiding place of the flutes and trumpets and are taught their names they are being initiated into a male cult and are drawn fully, thereby, into their roles as sibmen. The social function of the initiation is twofold: to complete the separation of the boy from his mother and align him with his father and his father's brothers, and to draw him from the immaturity of the play pack into the mature company of men. We may speak of these rites, therefore, as *rites de passage* as well, bearing in mind, however, that the passage is a long and gradual one. The Cubeo emphasis with respect to the development of the male is not that he suddenly crosses a dividing line from boyhood to manhood but that he grows. The magic of the initiation ceremony is a magic of growth. Growth magic, it will be recalled, occurs at three stages in a boy's development: at birth, after a year when he receives his name, and then for a series of years after he has entered the play pack.

For a fuller understanding of the Cubeo cult of *Bekîlpwänwa* one would need to know more about corresponding ceremonies among neighboring tribes. Curiously, no other ancestral cult has been reported for the entire Northwest Amazon. Koch-Grünberg, whose knowledge of the tribes of the region extended over many years, did not mention any ancestral doctrines even though he had lived for several months with the *Hehénewa* on the Cuduiarí. But like others who have studied this region his investigations were surely led astray

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769 171 (114) by that ubiquitous and meaningless term *yurupari*, lingua franca and Tupian for "devil," "spirits," "sacred," "mystery," and the like.[2] The Indians have learned to satisfy all foreign curiosity about their sacred practices by uttering the impressive word *yurupari*. All rites involving the use of the sacred and taboo-to-women, trumpets and flutes, have been invariably described in the literature as *yurupari*. We cannot assume, however, that because these instruments are ancestral embodiments among the Cubeo that they are so among all other tribes who use them. One of the striking characteristics of the entire Amazon drainage is the ready way in which form and content separate and recombine in new ways. It has been reported that among the Arawakan tribes in the region the flutes and trumpets represent the spirit of *Kówai* (*Kúwai*), the tribal culture hero (Koch-Grünberg, 1909, I, 187). On the Orinoco, von Humboldt (1852, II, 363) found a cult of sacred trumpets associated with the fertility of fruits and berries. The plant fertility aspect of the instruments is well-nigh universal in the region, suggesting that this may have been the oldest association. Among the Cubeo, too, the whipping ceremonies are (241) quite explicitly associated with the harvest of fruits and berries during the short summer season. Among the neighboring Tucano Indians, (881) where sacred horns are used in the initiation of young boys, (184) the instruments all have animal names, such as armadillo, paca, and (552) agouti, as well as a little bird. They are reported to be known as tamed animals, but there is no reference in this report to an ancestral cult (Ypiringa Monteiro, 1960).

769 171 As for the Cubeo ancestral features, it may be reasonable to suppose we are dealing with an Andean culture trait that has diffused eastward into the rain forest. Ancestors are prominent in the religions of the Chibchan-speaking Cágaba (Park, 1936), in northern Colombia, and, southwest of the Cubeo, among the Witoto Indians (Preuss, 1921–23; Whiffen, 1915; Steward, 1938), with whom the Cubeo show remarkably close affiliation. Among the Cubeo, we may 769 speculate, a fusion has occurred between an early ancestral cult and 534 a series of other culture elements such as harvest festivals, cultic 194 whipping, male puberty rites, and a secret men's cult in which spirits taboo to women are represented by musical instruments. As will be seen in a later chapter, a similar fusion seems to have occurred among 534 elements making up the complex mourning ceremonies.

Among the *Bahúkiwa* there are five pairs of musical instruments

[2] Actually Koch-Grünberg (1915–16) does give a native term for "*yurupari* dance" (*bekeboikelehapuire*, which has the meaning of "festival of the Ancients"), but he apparently attached no significance to the term.

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The Mourning Ceremony

Mourning for the recent dead provides the setting for the most complex and most important of Cubeo ceremonies. These ceremonies, known collectively as *óyne* (weeping),[1] usually take place as late as a year after death, preferably during the dry season when the pupunha palm is ripe. I attended two mourning ceremonies, one among a *Bahúkiwa* subsib and one, a very elaborate affair, among the *Hehénewa*. The last I witnessed from the very beginning.

The *óyne* consists of two parts: a long, three-day section, followed about a month later by a one-day concluding ceremony at which the spirit of the dead is finally evicted from the community.[2] During the first part, masked dancers impersonate many of the familiar beasts, birds, insects, and fish, as well as the mischievous spirits of the Cubeo world. These spirit beings come to mourn, but mainly to turn the people from grief. On this occasion the tribal "grandmother" and her consort, in the form of two great bark trumpets, also arrive to mourn.

Koch-Grünberg, reporting on the same group of *Hehénewa*, says that the trumpets are called *Uménahonkü* (Dragonfly) (1909, II, 151). He was not aware that the name referred to a *Hehénewa* Ancient. There are several possibilities to be considered in accounting

[1] Also *ohwinu* (weeping affair).

[2] There are also abbreviated one-day ceremonies for women, children, and men of small extended joint families. The three-day ceremony is most appropriate for a headman.

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765 for this contradiction. One is that different Ancients are represented
534 at different times. This possibility, though, is one that was never
● 114 mentioned to me. The origin myth of mourning, it should be noted,
769 refers to *Xudjiko* only. The other is the possibility of error, since
[773] Koch-Grünberg also labeled a trumpet used in initiation ceremonies as *Uménahonkü*. *Oýne* and initiation trumpets are never the same.

765 The dances, rituals, and dramatic representations of these first
786 three days range over a variety of themes, but all have the common
[154] purpose of transforming grief and anger to joy. In keeping with the characteristic pattern of Cubeo ritual that begins slowly and solemnly and ends in frenzied disorder, the first phases of the *óyne* also start from the dark mood of grief and anger and end in a sexual
[536] orgy. This first part of the *óyne*, in which the emphasis is upon transformation of feeling, is largely dramatic. The second part of the *óyne*, that lasts from late afternoon until the dawn of the following day, carries forward the theme of emotional transformation, ending in fact in true sexual license, when men are privileged to copulate
765 with their sib and phratry brothers' wives. Its main themes, however,
266 are religious and magical, including the aforementioned expulsion
[775] of the spirit of the dead as well as the magical absorption of the sub-
[614] stance of the deceased into the body of the sib. The latter is presumably accomplished by pounding the exhumed limb bones of the deceased into a powder and mixing them with chicha, which the men of the sib drink.

765 The women are weepers and have, in the main, a passive ritual
562 role. They huddle together with their nursing infants in the rear half of the house that for the occasion has been partitioned with a six-foot-high fence of poles and leaves set so as to form at the center an overlapping slit opening. The women are not allowed to see what is going on in the male section, while the slit opening allows the men to dance freely in and out of the women's section. Stimulated by masculine-initiated activity, the women burst into fits of ritual-
[786] ized weeping, their only active ritual role. Their proper role is to be acted upon, and to be brought to a point of ritualized sexual excitement so that they can be engaged in ritual and simulated coitus.

53 The masked dancers represent the nonhuman world of beings, the
765 beneficent and malevolent, the threatening and the ludicrous, as
[776] well as the neutral creatures. Their songs (*kwimaíwü*) are mournful and indicate grief for the deceased, but their dances and dramatic representations are of their own world. Each mask generally has its own song and characteristic dance, although the connection between mask, dance, and song is not rigidly kept. As the ceremony reaches

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its inevitable crescendo of excitement and disorder, dances and songs are interchanged.

In the course of the ceremonies, the relationship between the nonhuman world of the masked representations and the people, represented by the women, becomes increasingly more intimate, culminating, as we have already noted, in the total intimacy of coitus. The spirit of Cubeo ceremonialism is generally Dionysian. In religious excitement the Cubeo achieve a desired and temporary dissolution of the segmentation and conceptual separatenesses in normal social and religious life.

Koch-Grünberg (1906a), who observed part of an *óyne* in 1903 among the *Hehénewa*, saw in the masked dances two themes, an appeasement of evil spirits and fertility rites. My own information does not agree entirely with this interpretation. It is a fact that several of the masked dancers represent malevolent beings; the jaguar, that is the embodiment of the dreaded sorcerer, the butterfly, that symbolizes the act of sorcery, and the *abúhuwa* or forest monsters, that devour human victims. In addition the masked dancers represent the dung beetle and the vulture, eaters of offal and carrion. These creatures represent to the Cubeo the facts of death. Except for the *abúhuwa*, who are not taken too seriously, the most common agency of death is to the Cubeo a particular human enemy. Evil sorcery can be warded off by particular magical means. The masked dances, however, are not magical means for warding off danger. They are, rather, dramatic rituals whose purpose is to generate a frame of mind in which the fact of death is confronted and made to appear natural and tolerable. By coming to the house as guests, to dance, to sing, to drink chicha, and to "copulate" with women, the masked creatures are made to appear, finally, as a friendly part of the Cubeo world. The malevolent creatures are not singled out, but appear in the context of the whole ensemble of masked dancers.

As for the fertility theme, this has been a cherished cliché of earlier anthropology that promptly labeled any ritualization of sex as "fertility rites." The situation is more complex. The dancers do indeed represent male potency, but the simulated coitus emphasizes rather the carnal aspect of sex, for it is the older women, possessing the privilege of obscenity, whom the masked dancers "attack sexually."

THE MASKS

The dance masks of the Cubeo are made of a white bark cloth called *táwũ* (tree bark), which is also the name by which the masks are generically known.

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masks are generically known. Koch-Grünberg (1906a) has argued that they are sacred, citing as evidence that after the ceremonies the masks are burned. Many masks, however, are spared at the insistence of children who wish to play with them, and some masks are spared and used as storage sacks. Sanctity, I would say, is attached to individual masks, and is the sanctity of the being represented and not of the mask itself. Women, it is true, do not handle the masks, not out of taboo but rather out of the feeling that the masks are in the masculine domain. The masks represent spirits who are called generically
[776]
[756]
takahédekokũ (bark-cloth spirits). These spirits are visible only to the shaman.[3] All masks have a common basic shape, a large triangular sack that fits over the head and covers the body to the knees. Armpits are always cut out, and sleeves that come below the elbow are sewn in. The bottom of the skirt is stiffened with a circular hoop, and sleeves and skirt are hung with bark fringes. The masks have a head section, a middle section, and a bottom part. The head section is ordinarily painted with a face design that has eyes and a nose but not necessarily a mouth. Two eye holes and a nose hole are sometimes torn through for the wearer's convenience and do not correspond to the painted design. In some masks the head section is soft and in others it is surmounted by a calabash, painted brown or black, depicting a skull top; or the calabash itself has a face design painted on it and depicts, therefore, the face. The middle section is divided into several panels, half of them at the front and half at the rear. Each panel is painted in a geometric pattern that depicts the characteristic body features of the being that is to be represented. Fish, for example, have scale designs, and birds and flying insects wing designs. These designs are painted with great care by men who are particularly proficient. They follow traditional forms rather casually, however, each artist giving his own interpretation. The Cubeo do not quibble about the details of design. The fact is that no one can identify a particular representation with certainty without knowing who has made it. Only some of the masks, such as Jaguar, Butterfly, and *Abúhuwa*, are distinctive enough to be immediately recognizable. These masks, incidentally, also seem to be the most important.

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The use of ceremonial masks is common enough in South America, as Professor Alfred Métraux (1948) has observed, but we have as yet little information as to their meaning, nor do we know their full distribution. What is certain, though, is that masked cults have

[3] Koch-Grünberg (1906a) has observed that while the animal represented may be harmless, the spirit itself is magically powerful.

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danced the Jaguar. During the early part of the *óyne*, when proceedings are still orderly, the Jaguars and the Butterflies form an appropriate ensemble, the latter dancing in front of the Jaguars. Later a calculated disorder takes place. At this time the Jaguars tear the bark fastenings from their jug whistles and distribute the tough brown material to all the men to chew on so they may become "as strong and fierce as the jaguar." The jaguar song I collected is different from that recorded by Koch-Grünberg, but variations are common. Thus, when Koch-Grünberg saw the Jaguars among the *Hehénewa* they were not using jug whistles, while the Arawakan tribes were. The song I recorded was:

yavirárũ yavirákũ [repeated]
yavirárũ maníka
yavirárũ ya
ho ho ho o ho.

Like all mourning songs it had a slow rhythm and a hauntingly mournful tune. The Cubeo offered no translation. *Yavirákũ* means "big jaguar," and *maníka* may mean "children."[8] Koch-Grünberg collected a similar jaguar song among the Arawakans on the Aiarí River, whereas the song he recorded among the Cubeo is curiously quite different and does not even include the descriptive name *yavi*. There is good reason to suspect that these songs are widely exchanged.

The mask of Butterfly (*Taidnako*) is marked by triangular wing designs. The headpiece, moreover, has attached to it winglike structures made of bark cloth stretched over a frame of splints. The headpiece, which, like the Jaguar, has no facial markings, is built up around basket work to give it a bulbous appearance and to identify it with caterpillars, beetle larvae, and the sloth. A mask photographed by Koch-Grünberg has, in addition, an antennae-like strip arching forward over the face. The Butterflies also dance in pairs, often holding hands. Each holds a calabash in one hand and a stick in the other with which he strikes the calabash violently. This gesture imitates that of the sorcerer striking the pot into which the butterfly will fall. Their characteristic step is to run forward quickly and then take several slow steps back like the flight of the butterfly. Sometimes they drop to their knees to imitate the creatures resting. The song I recorded had the refrain *kavíré kavíré* and is not the same as that recorded by Koch-Grünberg on the Aiarí.

Koch-Grünberg observed nine types of demons or ogres, including

[8] The Cubeo term for children is actually *mandwa*. The term *maníka* may be a song transformation. However, this translation is very uncertain.

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a dwarf pair, several pairs of giants, a great owl demon, and two kinds of *abúhuwa*. I saw three *Abúhuwa*. The *Abúhuwa* are made to appear grotesque. Their masks are of coarse brown bark cloth and, unlike any other dancer, they sometimes wear bark-cloth trousers. One Indian said to me rather maliciously, "They are like the white man." One of the *Abúhuwa* not wearing trousers had large flapping breasts of bark cloth and was a "wife." The headpiece has a calabash to form a face painted with human features. The masks are intended to be as grotesque as possible. Since the *Abúhuwa* act clownishly, they induce in the spectators only mock alarm. The *Abúhuwa* have no song of their own and no fixed dance. They are free to improvise. There are two kinds of improvisation: wild when young men impersonate them, and listless and lolling when acted by old men. While the Jaguars act to build up a sense of violence, the *Abúhuwa* work to create disorder. Thus, no masked dancers will enter the women's quarter through the rear or women's door except the *Abúhuwa*. They burst in through the rear door, hopping in short strides as though they were on pogo sticks. They interfere with dances and perform a number of amusing skits.

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The Dung beetles (*Keratamúwa*) are a pair. The masks have a white facepiece with a pair of eyes, or sometimes with no features at all. The body design includes the wide bars of the insect's body flanked by lozenge designs on each side. The headpiece is surmounted by a short hourglass-shaped tube of splints and bark cloth. They dance holding hands. Each holds a short stick. In a dance Koch-Grünberg saw, they pushed along another stick on the ground in imitation, he noted, of their work as cleaners. I saw them holding their short sticks before them like wands. Their dance is a slow movement, forward and back. The songs recorded by me and by Koch-Grünberg are not the same.

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The Carrion vulture (*Kavú*) wears a mask with human features, although Koch-Grünberg saw one that he described as "naturalistic." The main design consists of very large lozenges (to depict the large feathers of the bird) flanked by horizontal bars suggesting outspread wings. The Carrion vulture carries a short stick held against the back of his neck, its ends extending over his shoulders, where his upraised hands hold it in place. The dancers bow gracefully from the waist to suggest the bird's soaring flight.

The Aracú (*Borikakú*) are usually represented in their several varieties. The headpiece is built up to a high peak made of splints covered with bark cloth in an hourglass design. The Aracú dance slowly, in pairs, and hold hands. Each carries a ten-foot pole bear-

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"*Dekóku*[7] has punished you." Then other people came and wrapped the boy in his hammock, put him into a large jar, and buried him in the house. No one wept. After three days an old man began to think what people should do about death. They decided to have an *óyne*. They made dance masks. At first they did not know how to make bark cloth so they made masks of leaves. *Kúwai* came and told them this was not good. In one day *Kúwai* made all the bark-cloth masks for the people. They did not know how to paint the masks and *Kúwai* showed them how. They gathered red pigment and carbon soot, and by midday the masks were all finished. *Kúwai* climbed the duka tree. At the top he cut off the bark and brought it down to make the fringes for the skirt and sleeves. The people then divided the maloca into a men's and women's part. In the men's part an old woman sat down to sing. But soon the real *Xudjiko* came along singing and the people were frightened. But *Kúwai* said, "Don't be afraid. This old woman is *Xudjiko*, who has come to help you weep." The old lady ran away and *Xudjiko* took her place. Then *Kúwai* said, "When other people die do the same thing. Weep for a short time only." He told them to dance and sing. When they had finished *Xudjiko* went away. She no longer comes. Instead they make a horn.

Xudjiko and her consort live at Uaracapuri, the source of the Cubeo. They were the first of the Ancients to die and they were the first to make the bark-cloth masks. The headpieces of the masks are set with feathers; the most prominent vertical feather is said to represent *Xudjikü* and the most prominent horizontal feather is said to represent *Xudjiko*.[8]

RITUAL THEMES IN THE ÓYNE

The five main sets of characters in the *óyne* each represent then one major ritual theme: the women represent weeping; the masks, the concern of the living world for the deceased as well as for the living; the minnows, the boisterous character of young men;

[7] The term means "ghost" or "spirit" but it has here the connotation of "Great Spirit." However, since I did not learn of a Cubeo belief in a Great Spirit the allusion is puzzling, and is to be considered as unexplained.

[8] The apparent inconsistency between this account and the previous one referring to *Kúwai* illustrates two strands in Cubeo mythical thought. One strand, nonancestral, focuses on *Kúwai*, a figure of the Arawakan tribes. The other strand is ancestral and is, perhaps, truly Tucanoan. The Cubeo do not reconcile both strands. The question of which version is produced depends on the context, which may be either general or ancestral.

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The first phase of the *óyne* concludes on the morning of the fourth 574
day. Despite the drinking and the exhaustion of frenzied dancing 576
the departures are as formal as the arrivals. The hosts form their
line at the doorway and the guests pass along, exchanging final ex-
pressions of grief. Men embrace one another and weep. Women weep [152]
once more with women. Before he leaves the house, each man pre-
sents the host with the masks he has brought, including all its orna-
ments. Among the *Hehénewa* the men mimicked the lamentations of
the guests after the last one had left, and all laughed.

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One month later a concluding and simpler ceremony is held. On [535]
the first evening the masks dance again and the *Xudjíko* is sounded. [534]
At dawn the masks and their ornaments, as well as all the ceremonial
paraphernalia made specifically for the *óyne* including the trumpets,
are burned in a great fire on the front plaza. Not all the masks are
destroyed, because the children are privileged to reclaim any they
wish from the flames. The burning puts an end to the jurisdiction
over the house of the spirit representations and officially concludes
the mourning.

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That evening the final dance is held. The house has now been re- 535
stored to a normal ceremonial state, and the dances of this evening
include men and women. They dance the ordinary dances of the
drinking parties and conclude with a great circle dance within the
house that includes all men, women, and youngsters. This dance is
known as *kompaindüwü* (going home). The dance forms on the plaza
and circles about a fire in the center of the house, moving clockwise
and then reversing. The men are fully ornamented and carry stamp-
ing tubes; a woman dances between two men. They sing a refrain, [533]
kenadjü marié kenadjü pimári. Periodically a woman dancer screams
loudly in a high-pitched voice, breaking in upon the somber melody. 765
As this dance continues through the night, couples break away and 535
leave for the brush behind the house. They copulate, return to the 786
dance, and seek new sexual partners. At this point the dance has [531]
become chaotic. No overt sexuality, however, occurs within the
house. These events conclude the social aspects of the *óyne*, and the 765
following morning, after the guests have begun to depart, is devoted 775
to dealing with the spirits of the dead. There are two events, the first 266
of which I was regrettably barred from observing. This may have 114
been the endocannibalism that Wallace reported in 1853 [10] and that

[10] "The Tarianas and Tucanos and some other tribes, about a month after the 171
funeral, disenter the corpse, which is then much decomposed, and put it in a 765
great pan, or oven, over the fire, till all the volatile parts are driven off with a most 184
horrible odor, leaving only a black carbonaceous mass, which is pounded into a 266

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Koch-Grünberg had described to him in 1903 (1909, II, 152). I observed the *Hehénewa* headman, with the older men of the sib around him, pounding bones in a mortar and adding the substance to an urn of chicha. When they saw me they angrily ordered me away. Later, informants denied knowledge of what they may have been doing. Koch-Grünberg, however, was told by the *Hehénewa* headman that the limb bones of someone who had died some 15 years earlier were cooked for about a month, reduced to ash, and then added to a special corn chicha which was then taken by all old men and women and by parents of more than three children. I did not observe the drinking of this chicha, nor did I hear of the custom during my stay among the *Bahúkiwa*.

Finally, the younger men of the sib burn dry capsicum peppers in the malora to drive away the ghost of the recently deceased. Thereafter, the deceased is to be forgotten and his name not mentioned for at least another generation.

MASK REPRESENTATIONS IN THE *ÓYNE*

Anthropomorphic Beings or Demons

1.	*Makuko*	(K-G)[a]	A bearded dwarf, represented by husband and wife. They lure hunters from their game and pantomime shooting a bark-cloth monkey with a blowgun.
2.	*Kohako*	(K-G)	Husband and wife giants who carry clubs and strike down hunters with them.
3.	*Hailako*	(K-G)	A giant who carries two heavy clubs, one in each hand.
4.	*Palutxiko*	(K-G)	A giant.
5.	*Anauako*	(K-G)	A giant.
6.	*Abúhuwa*	(K-G;IG)[b]	Forest demons.
7.	*Hokoaboxoko*	(K-G)	Giant tree demons.

[a] Reported by Koch-Grünberg.
[b] Personal observations by the author.

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fine powder and mixed in several large conches (vats made of hollow trees) of caxiri; this is drunk by the assembled company till all is finished; they believe that thus the virtues of the deceased will be transmitted to the drinkers" (Wallace, 1870, p. 498).

Endocannibalism has also been reported by Coudreau, who has observed that the Tucanos and Tarianas no longer follow this practice, which he attributed only to the Cubeo. "Ce ne sont plus aujourd'hui les Tarianas et les Tucanos qui boivent la cendre de leurs morts, comme le disait Wallace. Ce sont les seuls Cobbéos. Les gens de cette peuplade enterrent leurs morts; puis, quand les chairs sont pourries, ils lavent les os, les dessèchent, les brûlent, les pilent et, dans les dabucuris, mêlent cette poudre, précieusement conservée, au cachiri avec lequel ils boivent, en s'enrivant, les cendres des leurs ancêtres dont ils s'incorporent ainsi toute l'energie. Cette étrange boisson leur procure des délices extatiques ou furieux" (Coudreau, 1886–87, II, 173).

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home bleeding from his wounds and died. The people said that the jaguar had eaten the body and had returned only the *umé* for proper burial.

The shaman, whether *yavi* or *pariékokü*, chooses his calling. It does not choose him. There is nothing to suggest that the Cubeo shaman is an unstable personality in the way in which Siberian and many North American Indian shamans are. That is to say, among the Cubeo there is neither trance nor other form of "hysterical" behavior. The *yavi*, who cultivates the reputation of himself as a jaguar, is seemingly an aggressive antisocial type, in marked contrast to the favored Cubeo personality. I heard of only one woman who had become a shaman, and she was a transvestite who made such a nuisance of herself bothering women that the shamans who had prepared her stripped her of her powers. Any youth may become a shaman if he is accepted by the school of shamans, submits to the rigors of the novitiate, and passes an examination. As a young man he will not be a *yavi*. He becomes more malevolent and more dangerous with age. As an elder he finally acquires the power to appear as a jaguar.

The novitiate lasts from one month to five. None of my laymen informants could describe it in detail. The novitiate consists of four sections: abstinences, insertions of magical substances into the body, learning of songs and ritual, and examinations. The abstinences include sexual relations and the eating of fish, broiled game flesh, and, inexplicably, pineapple. One informant said that the novice, who is expected to become thin, lives on nothing but manioc and water.

The insertions described below are the actual sources of the shaman's power: (1) *duvalyo*, spines, the center stems of the leaf of the *amhókükü* tree, are softened and laid on the underside of the forearms until drawn in; (2) *hokúwe*, another spine, is inserted in the chest and in the palms of the hands; (3) *kenddox*, crystals of quartz, are inserted into the stomach; (4) *kwitóbo*, eagle feathers, are inserted up the nostrils to lodge in the head; (5) *dúpa*, the resin of the *amhókükü* tree, is powdered and inhaled to lodge in the heart;[4] (6) *kúria*, another snuff made from the bark of the *kuridkü* tree, is inhaled and produces a narcotic effect. My notes are not clear on whether *kúria* remains permanently in the body or is taken only for the narcotic effect. The *duvalyo*, the *hokúwe*, and the *kenddox* later serve the shaman as his own weapons to use against other shamans and to shoot into the body of a victim.

After the insertions have been made, the novice is taught songs

[4] Koch-Grünberg's information was that *dúpa* was a white stone, excrement of a great mythical eagle. However, I was given a piece of *dúpa* and it is a resin.

5: Goldman E-5 (1939-1940) 1963
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and curing ritual, including handling of the shaman's rattle. The bark of the *kuriákũ* tree is then prepared in a narcotic drink, also called *kúria*, which teacher and novice take together while singing the shamanistic songs. The instruction period concludes when shaman and novice sit side by side and under the influence of *kúria* sing and shake the rattle from dawn to sunset. At sunset a storm arises and passes quickly. Novice and teacher then go to the river to bathe; they rinse their mouths with water, return to the house, and eat. The novice spends five more days in isolation, repeating the insertions, and then he returns for his examination. He drinks *kúria* and sings until clouds come up. Then the teacher says to him, "Now you understand." He sings some more until the storm breaks, and the examination is over.

Curing is not a highly developed art. The shamans are the first to acknowledge their limitations. They claim only to be able to remove spines (*duwáiyo*) and crystals (*kenádox*) that another shaman has "shot" into the body. A common term for curing is *duwáitũwũ* (to extract spines). The repertoire of sorcery techniques, not to mention the poisons that sorcerers and malevolent people use, go beyond the assured skills of the curer. Thus there are many ailments which the Indians must be prepared to accept as irremediable. Under the circumstances, the anxious despair into which an ailing Indian falls when ill is readily understood. At the same time, the Cubeo are eager to accept medical treatment for any ailment, regarding such treatment as superior to that offered by the *yaví*.

I witnessed only one full curing treatment which, I was assured, was standard. The patient, an old man who died shortly thereafter, was carried from his hammock and seated on a low stool at the front plaza. The medicine man, who was referred to as *yaví*, a respect term only since he was not credited with the power to be a jaguar, held a rattle hung with parakeet feathers. He asked that two black earthenware pots filled with water be brought to him. He then went off to some bushes, from which he gathered leaves and kneaded them into the water. While doing this he secretly dropped a fistful of black spines into each of the two pots. The spines sank to the bottom. He approached the patient, lighted a long ceremonial cigarette, and blew tobacco smoke at all parts of the body where the ailment might lodge. As he blew the smoke he gestured with his right hand in a motion of waving away breath from his mouth. After each blow he stood up and sent what seemed to be breath and smoke off in the direction of the river and in the direction of the forest. The blowing was accompanied by a shaking of the rattle and was followed by chanted

5: Goldman E-5 (1939-1940) 1963
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safeguards sib solidarity. On the other hand, when the disputants are of different sibs it is relatively easy for the issue to embroil the sibs as entities and correspondingly difficult to confine the issue to the actual principals. The fiction of phratric consanguinity notwithstanding, the sib is still, in Cubeo thought, a natural unit that holds within itself the constant potentiality of antagonism toward the fellow sib. The fact that each sib arrives at a drinking party or other ceremony armed and as a unit is the symbolic expression of latent antagonism. The ritual theme of dissolving the semblance of sib unity through intoxication is presumably counteractive to sib solidarity and antagonism. Yet this counteraction via intoxication contains the paradox of bringing the undercurrents of antagonism to the surface. To be sure, when a quarrel occurs in the late stages of a drinking party it often is isolated because the other sibmen may not be fully aware of what is going on. The safety device does work, to a degree and for a time. Moreover, some men are known to be quarrelsome by temperament and are consequently ignored. Granted all these mitigating circumstances, it is easy for a man to involve his own sib in a dispute with another. When illness and death occur, one conclusion is inevitable. That is found in the expression "*they* want *us* to die." This theme recurs in the funeral orations. Perhaps it is because the Cubeo sibs have a history of separate though related origins and a tradition of past antagonisms that present-day intersib hostility can flare, and is expected to flare, even though the issues that disturb them are, at bottom, trifling. However, in conformity with the minor nature of the disputes is the absence, in recent times, of intersib warfare. The disputes result in coolness and social distance and not in organized fighting. In summary, phratric unity is readily disturbed but never very seriously. It is restored by the process described under "Periodicity." It is because the issues are not irreconcilable that the social "governor" that restores peace by separation can work so well

The orbit of the sib has the same general form as the orbit of the phratry, with the formal difference that the sib has a leader whereas the phratry has no leadership at all. In the sib, moreover, all the ties are substantially firmer than in the phratry. Since the cultural view holds that sib unity is a natural expectation and since there are no important issues dividing sibmates, we are faced with a truly difficult theoretical problem in accounting for sib fission. The common explanation, that fission of local groups in simple societies is due simply to insufficiency of food in the immediate locality, does not apply to the Cubeo, who, at least in modern times – a period of population decline – are not confronted by land shortage. There is, in

6: Moser and Tayler E.N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

Mitú had met his death with two of his Indians when their canoe overturned. The upper reaches of the river have a gentler gradient, passing through softer sandstones instead of the hard igneous rocks of the lower course. Nonetheless we soon had to negotiate our first rapids. To the uninitiated eye it seemed impossible to pass through, but Candilo, after one false attempt when the motor stalled, took the half-loaded *Vencedor* skilfully through the jutting boulders. Donald followed with our smaller motor powering the loaded *El Diablo*, her bows nosing into the frothing water and the waves breaking over the fuel drums. This was our first rapid; we had no idea that we would have so many more to negotiate before the end of our journey. Brian examined the rocks, chipping off pieces, looking at them through a lens and packing samples away for our geological collection. Then we lashed the canoes together as fast as possible and continued to creep along the banks, eating our lunch of dry biscuits and *farinha* – a thirst-quenching mixture of manioc flour and water, the Indian's habitual meal when travelling.

The tropical sunset is swift, with no extended twilight, and so by five-thirty each day we had to stop travelling and quickly find a break in the forested bank where we could make camp. Our boats tied and the cooking equipment ashore, we set about cutting a clearing. Horacio was a cook *par excellence*. Years of travel had taught him that the most efficient stove was to be made from a tall biscuit tin; you made your fire at the bottom and placed the pressure cooker on the top. We were eating our diet of rice and corned beef within half an hour of landing and, slinging our hammocks, were soon gazing up at the starry sky, listening to the croak of the bullfrogs.

Soon we left behind the wide Vaupés with its deserted forest banks and entered the black enclosed waters of the Río Ti. With the dry season already well advanced and with less water every day, we were forced to unlash our two canoes and continue with one following the other. The stream narrowed, the black waters shallowed and the white sandbanks crept closer on every bend. Near the mouth of the river we had arranged for two more Indians, the brothers Matias and Bernavez, to come to help us. They knew the route through to the Piraparaná and they warned us that, with our heavy loads, we were going to find the journey extremely difficult – unless it rained. Their warning was fully justified, for with the lower river level the fallen tree trunks formed one long barricade to our movement upstream. In the rainy season with the high water, one could float over them, but now every trunk had to be cut. Fortunately the Indians were experts with our axes, their muscular bodies perched precariously on a water-borne log, the axe falling rhythmically against the hard wood, the water splashing up into their faces. These were civilized Indians who could speak Spanish; they had

Working a trapiche, *a press for crushing the juice from sugar cane.*

6: Moser and Tayler E,N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

originally worked wild rubber for one of the great rubber barons and they had earned their clothing in exchange for their labours. Their torn trousers were only a veneer of the civilized world, for here they seemed to come into their own element: they talked to each other in Tukano; they became alert to the forest they knew so well.

We were living in a closed world of limited horizons, on either side the thick forest, ahead the river and above a ribbon of sky. Giant emerald kingfishers with orange heads and long black beaks darted out in front of us. Myriads of white butterflies rose off the sandbanks, settling on our bodies to enjoy the salty sweat. On occasions we saw a delicate wader like a sandpiper bob up and down on the sand near the water's edge. The water had now changed colour, no longer black but a deep wine red, as it flowed over the pale sandy bed. We supposed this colour was due to the high iron content in the rock.

Our first major halt was made at Pedro's house. He had established himself as a tradesman between the Indians on the upper Piraparaná and the civilized rubber gatherers of Mitú. He bought *farinha* from the Tukano in exchange for fish-hooks, salt and cloth. His magnificent thatched house was a foretaste of what we were to see. But the occupants with their dishevelled clothes, the sheets of crude rubber hanging from the beams and the iron cooking pots, seemed a strange paradox.

We unloaded all our equipment, sending Candilo and his assistant back to Mitú with *Vencedor* and the larger outboard motor. With him went one of our valuable cameras whose shutter had jammed during the first day, and a note to Nestor in Bogotá, warning him of the difficulties he would encounter and advising him again to travel as light as possible. Of the now depleted party, José and Uriel were to be our guides throughout the journey; Matias would ensure that we reached the first Indian habitation on the Piraparaná; while Bernavez went on ahead in his dugout canoe carrying two drums of our fuel. We were joined by one more man, old Miguez, who brought his own small Indian canoe. From now on we would have to make double journeys with *El Diablo* until we reached Indians who would carry our loads in their own canoes.

Next morning, while Donald and Horacio repacked much of the kit, Brian and José went ahead with a small load in *El Diablo*. The Ti narrowed and then divided; here our route towards the Piraparaná portage lay up a tiny tributary, the Caño Berada or Fish Bow Creek, as it was known to the Indians. With our arrival in the Berada, a mere stream flowing out of the undergrowth, our whole mode of travel changed. We could no longer use the motor; instead we had to push the boat upstream. We spent the rest of the day waist-deep in water, clambering over submerged timbers and occasional rocks; an Indian out in front cut a way through the fallen trees.

Christmas Day saw us cross two rock ledges where the boat had to be com-

6: Moser and Tayler E,N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

pletely unloaded and then dragged over. That evening was a beautiful one and we made camp at an old *mitasava*, the Indian traveller's staging point, where he erects a small palm-thatch shelter. We must have been on higher ground, for it was dry and sandy while the forest had changed to small birch-like trees, with lichen and moss underfoot. Somehow this was an appropriate place to eat our wild Christmas turkey which Miguez had shot earlier in the day and drink each other's health from the precious bottle of 'medicinal' whisky.

The next day our watery struggle continued and progress became even slower. Only half the equipment reached our camp site, this time back in low-lying forest. That evening Donald and José went ahead to the next stream junction to return at dark with the news that there was barely any water at all in the stream, and that we would be pushing the boat over dried-out sandbanks. Matias, our hardest worker, departed across country to the Piraparaná. He left at dusk, his coca pouch slung across his back to ward off the pangs of hunger. He promised to return in three days with men from the first habitation on the river; he was true to his word but it took him more than three days.

That night there was a disquieting atmosphere in the camp. Horacio was even more unhappy than usual about our excessive amount of equipment. Our three remaining Indians, José, Uriel and Miguez, kept to themselves, talking through half the night. We awoke to find Miguez vanished, never to be seen again, and José and Uriel packing their own belongings on to their backs. They said they were going to join Matias and bring back more men – we knew they were about to desert us.

We made them put down their gear and then listened to their tale of woe. We were not feeding them well enough; they wanted more than just *farinha*, they needed rice as well. They were being made to carry too much, and the stream beds were so dry that it would be impossible for us to get through until the rains arrived. So we compromised, we agreed to leave behind some of the fuel if necessary and to give them the same food as ourselves; we repeated our promise to pay all the Indians who worked for us in cloth and trade goods – or even money if it was of any use to them.

During the day we pushed the boat, first down to the previous site and then, fully loaded, back towards our present camp. Once Horacio lost his way when taking a short cut; he was not well and we thought it was due to a recurrence of malaria. That night he became worse, and with him unfit we decided to go ahead on a reconnaissance with José, leaving him to guard the equipment and recover, while we tried to reach the other side of the portage; if necessary we would go overland to find the first house.

Early next morning we packed our rucksacks and left with a week's supplies. Walking over high ground with willows, lichen and moss, to our great joy we reached the western entrance to the portage after only two hours. We walked through the low scrub for half an hour, along the path

6: Moser and Tayler E,N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

under his battered trilby and the groundsheets, while Brian dived beneath the tarpaulin and spent the night stretched over tins and kitbags.

The New Year came in with more rain. For all the discomfort it brought we could only look upon such deluges as a sign of good fortune; they were early this year, the rivers would now be higher and our descent easier. So we started on our journey downstream. *El Diablo*, lumbering along like a loaded ark, was stopped by every snag and log. She took days to cover the same distance as the slim canoes of the Indians, when they later travelled back up the river in a matter of hours to pick up the fuel drums we had had to leave behind on the portage.

One day canoes appeared gliding towards us, both loaded down with large wicker baskets of *farinha* and paddled by two men in loincloths. Strings of minute white beads were around their necks and black berry bracelets around each arm. An old man, his wizened face eyeing us suspiciously, was sitting in the bows of the first canoe.

This was our first real contact with the Indians of the Piraparaná. Their immediate reaction was not one of fear, but rather, like our own, of enquiry and interest. They said nothing until José hailed them in their own dialect. There ensued a long, almost formal exchange of greetings which we were to hear many times when travelling through their territory. Before they left we asked them to carry a message for Nestor – in case they should meet him, for they were travelling to the Río Ti.

Much depended on our guide José. That he had been with Padre Elorza was not necessarily to our advantage, for in the first place we could not be sure what effect the first contact with Catholicism had had on the Indians of the Piraparaná, nor did we know what instructions José had been given by the padres. We had to depend on him entirely both for our own safety when travelling downstream and for the information we were to get. He was not a very pleasant or easy character. From the outset he had always wanted to have his own way and if this was not granted then he became moody and unco-operative. We could never be certain what he would do next and after his attempt at desertion we could not trust him. However he worked very hard and showed remarkable common sense, and without him we would never have got through the rapids ahead of us.

His experience with white men had not only come from the Mission. Some five years previously a *cauchero* had come to his river home close to the Brazilian frontier. He had taken six boys away with him to work the wild rubber trees and one of them was José. Later he had escaped from the *cauchero*, but during those four years he had learnt how to operate an outboard motor, to handle money and had even been in an aeroplane. He had come under the Mission's wing only recently, and it may have been this combination of experiences that had complicated his character. He no longer possessed the Indian's direct simplicity.

6: Moser and Tayler E,N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

2

A Death

114 Matias arrived at the *maloca* the following day with the rest of the equipment we had left behind at the portage. Without his help we would have had to abandon it. That same night he started back on the return journey with his brother Bernavez, back to their *maloca* on the Río Ti. With them seemed to go our last contact with the outside world. Now was the time to collect our thoughts, to reorganize the equipment and to decide how we were going to carry out our work. The surroundings, the atmosphere, the Indians, everything was new. Each day, when evening arrived and we had eaten, we would sit across our hammocks and read by the light of a candle, or write up the day's events in our diaries. On Friday 6 January Brian wrote:

123 276 'Did not sleep very well last night, probably because I had taken a large mouthful of coca just before getting into my hammock. Nearly choked, the fine green powder making it virtually impossible to breathe; so had to run down to the river and wash my mouth free. The Tukano must have a special method for swallowing it.

512 The women got up very early, long before dawn, but I couldn't tell the time because my watch was lost on the way over the portage – too bad. They rubbed down manioc and the continuous noise made all further sleep 126 impossible. Horacio left for the river before first light to develop a film he had taken with his old Rollei, also one of mine to see whether I'm giving the correct exposure in these dark conditions. He prepared the hypo last night and has to develop before the water temperature rises.

114 At dawn Kuarumey opened the door and the cold air rushed into the *maloca*. I went out to the jungle to relieve myself, armed as usual with a bottle to collect a humus sample. We do this nearly every morning – all these tiny bottles. I wonder whether the American drug company will ever discover a new Amazonian anti-biotic? Lovely pale pinks and delicate blues, the mist rising in great banks off the forest, and dew dripping from the trees. It was so peaceful and cool.

We joined Horacio for a late breakfast; all of us rather at sixes and sevens with each other as to what to do. The last days have taken a lot out of us and

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000 *Our train of canoes on the Piraparand – José in front.*

 [see p. 46-A]

/p. 46-A/

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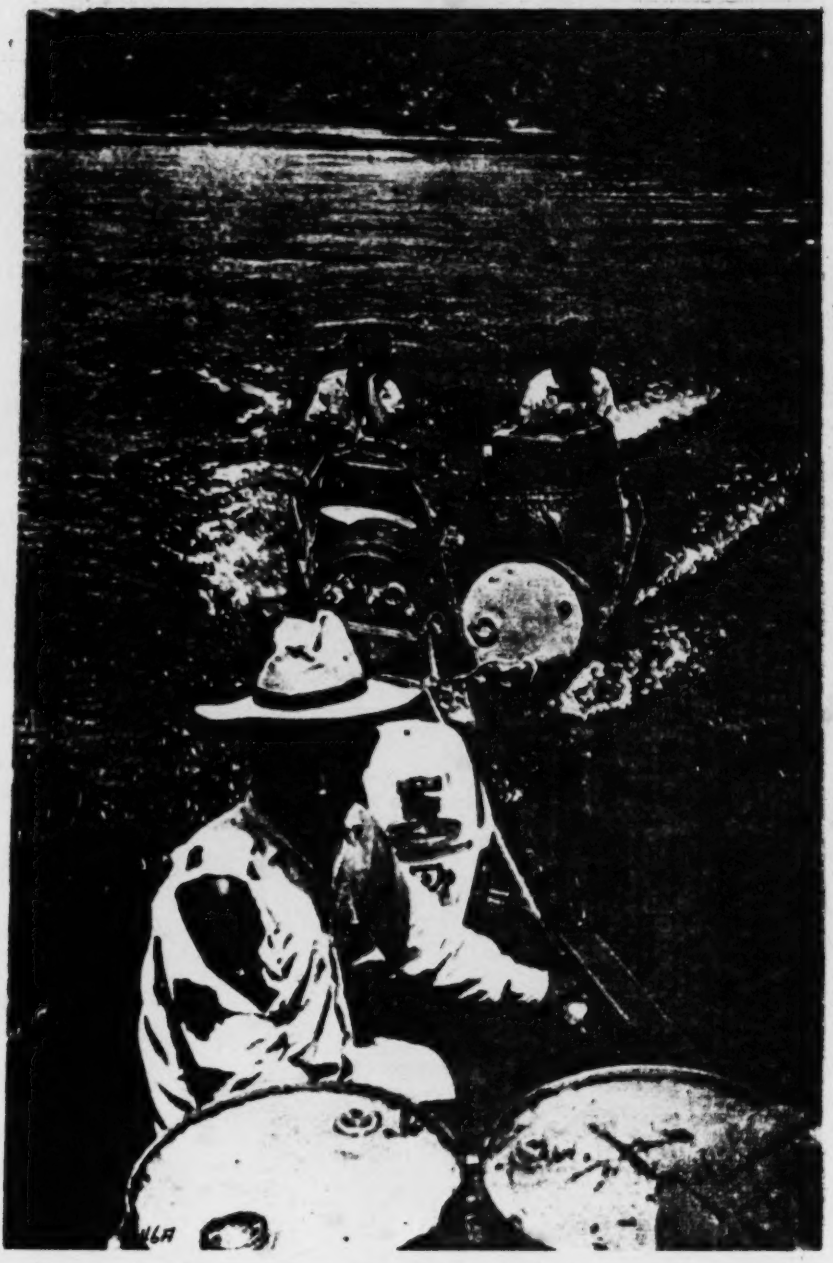

Our train of canoes on the Piraparaná - José in front.

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LEFT: Horacio López. CENTRE: Donald Tayler. RIGHT: Brian Moser.

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at times we are very irritable. Donald, the most silent, is by far the most understanding, while Horacio and I with our opposite points of view tend to get across one another.

Spread out the two tarpaulins on the sand in front of the *maloca*, then all the equipment on top of them, once more throwing everything to the air and the sun. Donald and I doctored our sores. Both he and Horacio have the beginnings of boils on their arms; this could be dangerous. If our sores go septic we really shall be in a mess – we had better take some penicillin. Donald dealt with the medical kit, Horacio checked over all the food supplies. With his blue and red pinstripe shirt, a Roman nose and scruffy growth, he looked just like an Arab street vendor squatting over his wares in the *souk*. We seem short of meat and Nescafé but otherwise all right. I took out all the cameras. Some of the lenses are in poor shape and neither the electronic flash nor my Japanese one is working. Spent ages trying to repair them and reached the conclusion that the filament on the electronic had broken – probably knocked as we came over the portage. Donald discovered a dud contact on the Jap flash and after much wastage of bulbs and various electric shocks got it to work.

The heat at midday is tremendous but a swim in the river refreshed me. José and Kuarumey had gone out with our two twelve-bores and returned at noon with three *pava*. Being stationary is a blessing; we can send the Indians off hunting – they love using our guns – and so supplement our rations. Have to be careful because Nestor should soon be arriving.

p.m. I slung my hammock between two trees – the sandflies never seemed to leave me alone – and wrote up my geological notes till the sun went down. Am putting all the specimens in sample bags, and it's lucky we have them, for some of the sandstones are crumbling to pieces. Horacio measured the rice into our bright-red tins – funny to think they were once green and with me in the snow and ice of Cocuy. Donald spent the whole afternoon drawing the *maloca* – beautiful, he should have been an architect. The children love watching him, and one little boy – I think he's Kuarumey's son – kept tugging his long beard, then racing over to feel mine, completely intrigued by our hairy faces.

Spent the evening editing birdsong tapes with Uriel who gave me long descriptions of each bird; we had seen very few of them. Surrounded by many overwhelmed listeners, and one boy started to imitate some of the songs amazingly. Ate rice and stewed bird and after silica-jelling the cameras (the plastic bags seem to puncture easily) climbed into my hammock. It's now late, a woman is still rubbing manioc somewhere in the darkness: they always seem so willing to help us, but Kuarumey, no ... he's sitting beneath

LEFT: *Horacio López*. CENTRE: *Donald Tayler*. RIGHT: *Brian Moser*.

[See p. 46-B]

6: Moser and Tayler E,N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

A Death

The tinder-dry wood heaped underneath was soon alight and Kuarumey, helped again by his son, began to turn the hull, holding the canoe on rollers, first the right way up, then upside down and lastly on its side. The flames from the fire leapt five feet into the air all along its length and the men began to sweat as they watched. Soon they were covered in charcoal from head to foot. Every so often Kuarumey reached for his coca bag and shook some of the powder into his mouth. Gradually the sides of the trunk were forced open and wedges were placed along its length.

'In the Llanos they hang the canoe over the fire and there is less danger of the wood actually bursting into flames,' said Horacio. At that moment Kuarumey's wife approached us along the path carrying an earthen bowl full of *chicha*. 'And they don't let women approach during the burning for fear of the wood splitting.'

All day long they worked on the smouldering canoe. About midday they bound the ends with liana to prevent it splitting and occasionally put mud on the thinner parts to prevent further burning. The work was completed before dusk. The canoe would cool gradually during the night, and in the morning the braces would be removed and replaced by flat wooden supports. Then Kuarumey would try out his new canoe in the river. It was well built and the sides were even, barely half an inch thick throughout. It should last him for several seasons, providing he did not lose it during the winter floods.

The sun shone warmly on the russet water as Kuarumey paddled the slim canoe away from the port and down the river – so light, so strong, so manageable and in shape so beautiful, yet for ourselves unthinkable – we would have capsized in a moment; only Horacio could master an Indian craft. *El Diablo* was now on the bank drying in the sun, and Horacio and José were starting to recaulk the battered shell.

The rough passage over dried-out river channels, through log-strewn stream beds, across the portage and over vicious rocks, had jarred the joints so much that, were we now to have slid her into the water, she would have sunk like a sieve. For days we had left her on the bank to absorb the heat of the morning sun, turned her and then covered her with a tarpaulin against the occasional afternoon storms, Now the old caulking was pulled away and melted down together with the pitch we had brought from Mitú. However, this was not sufficient and José exchanged some of our fish-hooks for wild beeswax and resin, and this too was melted down.

The fragrant smell of pitch and beeswax filled the air and as the lumps slowly dispersed in the bubbling black syrup, José began to tell of the rapids which lay ahead: 'Listen to the water,' he said, and in the distance we could hear the rumbling; the falls were three bends downstream. 'Only half a day's journey away is the fall we call Piña. In the dry season it is a long series of rapids and we need help to carry everything from the upper end, through

6: Moser and Tayler E.N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

114 the forest to the port at the lower side. We generally take three hours along this trail, but you will take more.'

So he went on. We would need people to help us through at each major fall. Now we fully realized what an encumbrance our equipment was still going to be. But there seemed to be a *maloca* near most major rapids and with luck we could ask for help from the people living in them, though here again José was uncertain: 'Much depends on whether there are any men at home and whether they want to carry such heavy loads. There are many *cachiveras*, and Yavakaka – the Otter – one of the largest, has no one living near it.'

We counted sixteen major falls in all, but often one *cachivera* would consist of many rapid sections covering at least two or three bends in the river. José would demonstrate these by drawing with his finger in the sand. Our imaginary map of the Piraparaná became a hazardous line curling southwards. There would be at least two interruptions a day on a journey which would take the Indian in his fast canoe seven days to complete, but ourselves – we hardly dared guess.

El Diablo was due for as hard a buffeting, if not harder, than she had already had. Her hollowed tree-trunk shell was, with the exception of one hole, in perfect condition. Above, forming a freeboard, were the planks from which we had stripped the caulking. We dipped hemp – instead of our trousers – into the boiling pitch and Horacio vigorously tamped the sticky black wads into the seams and cracks. Once the outside was complete we wedged the same cracks from the inside. By early afternoon all the seams shone black, the wood was dry, and as we slid her down to the river she seemed barely half the weight we had dragged up the stream beds. *El Diablo* had a new look.

Late the same evening, after we had taken our boat and the remaining eight fuel drums below the first rapids, José came up to us as we sat talking in our hammocks. In the centre of the *maloca* the men were squatting on their stools taking coca. At the far end a woman delicately turned a cassava cake to bake its underside on the hot clay oven. José stood between our hammocks, slung in a triangle, the candlelight flickering on his face.

'After the journey to the next *maloca*, I do not want to work for you any more. My brother and I are going home to our *maloca* on the Querarí.'

This was a shock. The house was only two days downstream, and José had threatened to leave us before. We treated the matter more lightly than he perhaps had expected. He asked to borrow one of the shotguns and Brian lent him his twelve-bore. Such a move might be judged foolish, but we knew

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000 ABOVE: *Negotiating shallow rapids with* El Diablo *on the Piraparaná.* BELOW: *Getting the fuel drums across the river.*

[see p. 50-A]

/p. 50-A/

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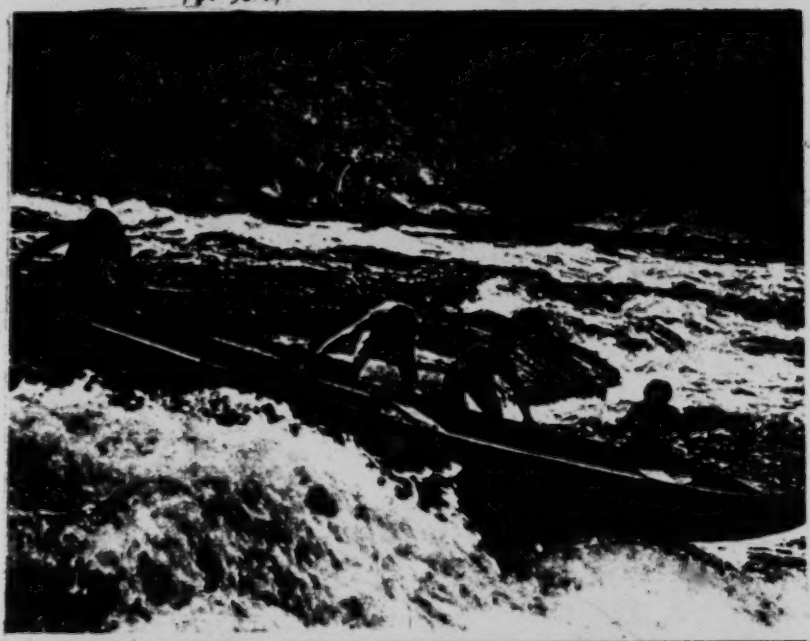

ABOVE: Negotiating shallow rapids with El Diablo on the Piraparaná.
BELOW: Getting the fuel drums across the river.

6: Moser and Tayler E, N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

that José was the one man who could take us through to the mouth of the Piraparaná.

Throughout the whole journey the factor which played more on our minds than anything else was uncertainty. The way back over the dry channels was almost out of the question and the Indians would never have taken us; the way forward appeared to be a long succession of cataracts. Then there was the question of Nestor – would he ever arrive and how long should we wait? The longer we stayed the more insistent José became about leaving. He did not enjoy his role as an interpreter, he did not like asking his fellow-Indians questions and he seemed completely indifferent to the work we were trying to do. All this was understandable but it did not ease our position.

It was cold and wet when José and Uriel left early next morning to take a load of equipment ahead. Mist hung low over the forest and the trees dripped with moisture. 'This is white rain,' said Horacio. 'It is more usual in the winter months, so perhaps we are due for a wet spell and Nestor will get through after all.' We all had doubts in our minds and now, with José gone, we had no means of talking to the people in the *maloca*.

Suddenly Kuarumey's wife ran out and grabbed Brian's arm, beckoning him to follow her inside. From the far end of the dark interior, behind the palm screens, came strange sobs. The sounds rose and fell; across the bare earthen floor a slight figure bent over the embers of a dying fire. It was Watsora whose husband had been away on a hunting expedition for nearly a week. Her naked body, lit only by a dull red glow, was doubled up. She heaved and hardly seemed able to breathe. Only the day before she had carried her heavy basket of manioc from the plantation. Now her thin, drawn face, her sagging breasts, her dishevelled hair, aged her beyond belief. A young girl clutched her around the waist and moved to and fro with the heaving figure, quietly chanting to herself. Watsora's baby son ran to his mother's side and clasping her arm began to cry.

Kuarumey's wife implored us to help. She pointed to the black medicine chest. Only the previous night we had given the headman aspirin, but this illness seemed much more serious than a headache. We could not be sure what was wrong. Perhaps she had an internal haemorrhage, maybe it was consumption, or was it appendicitis? We couldn't know, none of us was a doctor. Horacio was firm: 'No, we must not give her any drugs, for if she dies, then what do you think will happen to us?' For a time we argued but eventually agreed. Horacio was right: no matter what we felt, we could not afford to be held responsible for her death, nor could we interfere.

A Tukano shooting fish with a long fish arrow.

[see p. 50-B]

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3

Warpaint

Below Kuarumey's the river was wider and deeper – deep enough to use our diminutive 7-h.p. Johnson outboard motor. Frequently during a day's journey we would come to rapids or a fall where everything had to be removed from the boat and carried to a point where it would be possible to reload. Then, using ropes, slithering over the rocks, pulling, pushing and heaving, we would get the empty eight-hundred-pound shell over the rapid sections. Sometimes the canoe seemed on the point of being swept away to destruction, but José and Uriel, together with the Indians, who for the small reward of beads, a piece of cloth or nylon fishing line were always ready to join us, seemed to know exactly how to manage it, though much bigger than their own light and portable craft.

Where the rapids were long and severe or there was a bend in the river, the Indians would sometimes have made a portage through the forest. On these occasions we would disappear for long periods, pushing and heaving *El Diablo* over the twisted roots and swampy ground through a jungle labyrinth, to reappear shouting and yelling to encourage ourselves at the lower end of the rapids, ready to load and continue on our way. During the severer overland passages the canoe might get a bad knock, and in spite of the recent overhaul it would be necessary to do more caulking. Sometimes, in despair, we doubted whether the old boat would even reach the Apaporis before she finally gave up and sank. To return the way we had come – which had been our original intention – was out of the question. Our only way out was to the Caquetá, a major tributary of the Amazon. What this journey would entail we could not imagine, for all the maps we possessed had often proved incredibly inaccurate. Of the time it would take us and the route we knew nothing. We had, however, heard that the lower reaches of the Apaporis were impossible to navigate owing to a series of great falls and rapids. This knowledge certainly gave us cause to worry during the ensuing weeks.

José by now had taken over responsibility for the motor. We took it in

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LEFT: *The front, painted with a design in charcoal and clay, and great eaves of a* maloca. RIGHT: *Cutting palm fronds to thatch the roof.*

6: Moser and Tayler E.N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

114 turns to take bearings and to time distances for our very rudimentary compass traverse. Often we came to fast sections of the river, where we would stop the engine, raise it off the back of the canoe – to which it was lashed by a piece of rope in case of an accident – pick up our paddles and guide the canoe through the swirling waters. It was as well we had the Indians with us on these occasions, for we never knew what lay ahead, and the water swirled by faster and faster. The following was a daily occurrence: '*El Diablo* was filling with water rushing in over her stern. We hung desperately on to extremely slippery rocks, then suddenly got lost in the froth with the boat going safely ahead. The boys take it all in their stride and utter high-pitched yells as they miraculously guide us through the more dangerous parts with their paddles.' Horacio was in his element at such times; all his travels by canoe in the higher tributaries of the Orinoco had been done with a paddle as his only means of propulsion. An engine was anathema to him, something totally unreliable, which invariably broke down at the worst possible moments and wasted days in repairs – if repairs were possible – whereas a paddle provided unfailing if slow progress.

At this stage we not only had to travel down the river but also to return up it, as we still had too much equipment to take at once. Normally José and the Indians would travel downstream for several hours with the equipment, then return for us. It was on one such journey of José's that the outboard started misbehaving. It was too late to do anything when the engine finally stopped and refused to restart. The following morning we found to our dismay that it had seized up. We stripped it down and after completely dismantling it found that the gearbox oil had leaked away and the whole shaft had locked solid. Fortunately we had enough gearbox oil in reserve – later we learnt that bananas make an excellent substitute – and we thought all was well again until, as the gearcase was being replaced, the clutch sleeve snapped. This rendered the engine useless. So that day we continued paddling down river in a very despondent mood – the thought of paddling our way to the Caquetá was not a happy one. The best we could do was to make for the next *maloca* and if possible effect a repair.

We arrived at the *maloca* that afternoon. Not a single Indian was within sight, not even a dog. At first we assumed the house had been abandoned, but a smell of wood smoke lingered. Puzzled, we noticed the fires had only recently been left. This was the first time we had encountered such a breach of hospitality, for the Indians must have known of our approach. We assumed however, they would return at nightfall, so we set about hanging our hammocks and preparing our beans and rice.

[123] The Indians did not return that night or the next, and the deserted *maloca* seemed strange and forbidding. Horacio was certain that these were unfriendly Indians and that this was their way of showing it. We should therefore be cautious and move on as soon as possible. But the broken

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engine enforced a stay. We tried wood, then Perspex to replace the broken sleeve, and it was several days before we found that a section from one of our aluminium eating plates was the answer. 114 •

One day, while we were waiting in the deserted *maloca*, we were suddenly surprised by shouts. Outside a fierce-looking Indian with a carved redwood club in his right hand stamped and grunted his way round the bare sandy ground in front of the *maloca*. He was followed by three younger men, each carrying a machete, all with their faces covered in red warpaint. Mario Capitan, who had been made a 'chief' by the *caucheros* wore a long white feather in his ear-plug; he seemed annoyed. Probably he had come out of curiosity or to demonstrate his authority, or he may have heard of Watsora's death. His father had had great influence over the lower Piraparaná, murdering all whites who entered. Mario, we reflected, could well do the same. Then suddenly and silently he and his small band of warriors departed to the river, to their canoes, back to their own forest home. 123

It was with some relief that we set off again from the deserted *maloca* to continue downstream. At night we would clear an area near the bank for a camp site, put up the tarpaulin for the equipment, then sling our hammocks to the nearest trees. If it started raining we would have to huddle under the tarpaulin till dawn. It was much pleasanter when a *maloca* was close by at the end of a day's journey, as there we were assured of warmth and a roof over our heads. 114

During the course of our journey we visited fifteen *malocas*; in some we only stayed overnight, in others several days. They extended a distance of about 250 river miles – from Kuarumey's to the last rapids on the Piraparaná, about 100 miles from its mouth.

Though at times we were angry with José for always hustling us on with threats of desertion if we did not continue downstream, it was for the most part only through him that we could talk to the Tukano: only those who had worked rubber knew any Spanish. It was during these visits that we became better acquainted with the Indians, though they remained remote, perhaps because they distrusted us, true 'Sons of the Forest', their personalities hidden as deep within themselves as they were deep in Amazonia.

6: Moser and Tayler E.N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

7
Missing Links

Until we had passed the last rapids on the Piraparaná we were always anxious, as we were never sure how long José would stay with us. Had he left us we might have found it difficult to get other Indians to help, and certainly we could never have managed *El Diablo* ourselves. There were many occasions when he had threatened to leave, but so far he had been persuaded not to. So it was with some relief that we passed these rapids, though there was nearly disaster, for José determined to take *El Diablo* through fully loaded. We watched aghast from the bank as for a moment the boat completely disappeared from view in the turbulent water. But somehow she stayed afloat.

Now the river was anything from thirty to a hundred yards across. It wound sluggishly this way and that between low banks covered in dense forest and bordered with *miriti* palms. There were no houses, for most of the land was liable to flooding during the wetter months. We saw no Indians on the river, nor any canoes moored to the banks. At times the river meandered forming giant oxbows, where, through the sparse jungle, we could see a bend in the river that we had passed perhaps an hour before. At one of the bends a low cliff rose sheer from the water's edge. It was formed from clay and shales of Tertiary age, and in the beds Brian found deposits of lignite, tree-trunks and plant remains. To the west of us lay the Apaporis, to the east continuous forest as far as the Río Negro, the home of strange, seldom-seen foresters, the nomadic Maku.

Since leaving Bréo's *maloca* we had been troubled less by flies and insects; the jigger worms, which had laid their eggs in our feet when we walked barefoot about the *malocas*, no longer bothered us. Only the *nutchis* remained as they took some days to incubate. One night after an exceptionally large one was removed from Donald's shin, he wrote, 'A rather painful process. However it had its reward for it was definitely a record breaker – fat, furry, and fully half an inch in length....' They could only be extracted by using nicotine to poison them, or rubber latex to block their breathing holes where they lay under the skin. We never learnt how we got these painful worms.

ABOVE AND BELOW: *Dancing at the festival to celebrate the manioc harvest.*

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114 Probably they resulted from a small fly or mosquito injecting the egg into
136 the bloodstream. Horacio had come across them in the Llanos, but only in cattle and dogs, never in humans.

Though seldom bothered by mosquitoes we occasionally ran into a belt of the *pium* fly which could give very irritating bites. At night when we found a sand-spit, or dry ground in the forest where we could sling our hammocks in the trees, we would first inspect the ground to ensure that our equipment would not be covered in termites or ants by the morning. Fish, which the Indians caught for us, was now our main food. One type looked and tasted almost like salmon; another, a flat fish, was very similar to the *piraña* with its razor teeth and protruding lower jaw. Even in February, towards the end of the dry season, many days were overcast. When the sun did appear, it was usually followed by a heavy afternoon rainstorm often accompanied by a cold wind, so that in spite of our nylon jackets we found ourselves shivering with cold. One day we passed very close to a green water snake. It coiled itself and thrashed the water with its tail, its head out of sight, until it finally disappeared locked in the jaws of its invisible assailant.

Along the river banks and high in the trees overhead, we saw herons, ibis and egrets, a brownish bird similar to a bittern; king-fishers, not so brilliantly coloured as the British kind, and duck would rise off the water in front of the boat. The varying shades of green were broken by white hibiscus, the crimson flowers of the chocolate tree, the flashing blue wings of the giant morphous butterfly or the wasp yellow of a swallowtail, beautiful butterflies which sting like fire-ants as caterpillars and live on blood, offal and manure. Sometimes the transparent glinting wings of a dragonfly passed by, while at night shadowy nightjars flitted over the river between the pin-point glows of the fireflies.

114 On the evening of the second day after leaving the rapids we sighted the
133 Apaporis, a river of strange contrasts with its great width, muddy banks and putty-coloured water. We had decided to reach the falls of Jirijimo. They were alleged to be a magnificent sight when the river was in full spate. A few people had seen the falls from the air, though in the days of the rubber boom the river was used as a highway, and the *caucheros* had made ramps through the forest as a portage. But this movement up and down the river had always been during the wet season, and we were travelling during the last month of summer, when in fact the river was at its lowest ebb.

For two days we moved up the Apaporis after making a dump of all our equipment, including the Indian canoe which we hid in the forest, for we knew we would have to return the same way. On the evening of the second day we reached the falls of Playa, somewhere below Jirijimo. In the winter it would have been possible to have hauled the boat on to the great sandstone slabs and pulled it up the ramps, which, though terribly overgrown during
114 the last thirty years of disuse, could have been cleared sufficiently. But now

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to our dismay we were confronted with the magnificent but daunting falls. 114 ●
The river tumbled a vertical forty feet over the lip of the basin into the turbulent water below, with a roar and a mass of spray, while all around were sheer walls of rock.

We tried to find a solution. We spent a day walking up the river only to find more falls above Playa. Somewhere behind, further up the river, lay Jirijimo, but how far away we did not then know. Should we try to walk through the jungle to the falls, even if it meant several days' journey without any certainty of finding them at the end? This might have been our best chance. Should we return to pick up our small Indian canoe, and carry that over the falls? It would take too long and we did not have the reserve of fuel. Could the five of us manage to pull *El Diablo* up the vertical face and, once over that, find our way up the next falls? As the boat was already in a flimsy condition, it seemed unlikely that she would remain in one piece. She would have to survive the return journey as well, and we did not relish the thought of walking to the Caquetá.

That night Brian, who had remained the most undaunted, wrote in his diary, 'We clambered over the rocks and through the very overgrown and at times almost vertical ramp – this will prove a hellish problem with only five of us and a boat which is semi-rotten, held together by beeswax and old trouser legs....' The following day: 'We all seemed in a bleary state, probably because *a fondo* all of us knew this would be the furthest we would get ... I still think we could make it, but the time factor and the risk involved to the whole expedition just do not make the attempt worthwhile.'

Realizing the futility of continuing, we prepared to spend another night below the falls. Over the river a tern circled, hovered, dived into the water with a splash, came up, then dived again, on and on till the dusk turned the greens to black. The moon rose high, the colour of straw changing to a white so brilliant that we could read in our hammocks. The water moving down from the falls was covered with a froth of giant bubbles, making the surface look like an ice-floe, dazzling white in the moonlight. The following day we turned back the way we had come. Some hours after starting Horacio found that he had left his rifle behind, so we had to return to the falls. That night we all seemed a little despondent; we still had a long way to go and we did not know what lay ahead. There was no need to build a shelter or raise a tarpaulin, the sky was clear and the sands still hot from the day-long sun. Earlier we had washed our clothes in the river and bathed, sliding our feet along the muddy bottom; for there were rays, and by doing this there was less risk of stepping on one. Along the edge of the sand-spit were the cloven-hoofed slots of a tapir, and the rounded pad marks of a puma. Perhaps that night we had disturbed many forest animals at their usual watering place, the only sandbank for many miles along this side of the river. Overhead hung the Milky Way and Orion's Belt – with the binoculars we could see

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114 the nebula in his sword. Sirius stood out a pale electric blue and later we could see the Morning Star in the east.

The river was wide and very shallow, and we got into difficulties: 'José went to sleep on the engine and we hit a rock in midstream – a horrible grinding noise as it passed under the boat, then a crash as it hit the engine. She is letting a lot of water in, though it does not seem to have damaged her seriously. We are lucky; if this had been an aluminium boat she would have ripped from end to end.'

Two days below the falls we reached our dump again and reloading our equipment set off downstream, waving goodbye to Uriel who set off for his *maloca* on the Querarí; only José now remained. *El Diablo* was fully loaded again, she began leaking badly and Horacio made running repairs as we moved down the river. Soon a wind got up, the water became very choppy and we found ourselves baling continuously as the water slopped over her two or three inches of freeboard. She was not going to last very much longer.

175 All along the banks the forest presented a solid wall. There were seldom any breaks where there might have been a habitation. A clan of the Tukano, the Letuama, had lived here before the advance of the rubber barons early in the 342 century. A few still remained and we visited one of their houses. The *maloca* was shaped like a pagoda, quite unlike anything we had seen before, round at the base with a steeply slanting thatched roof, terminating in a ridge about thirty feet above the hard earth-baked floor. Inside, every sheaf of each section of thatch seemed to have been measured and the whole had an appearance of amazing symmetry. The light came in through two roof apertures and inside, though cool, it was nearly as bright as outdoors. This was surprising as the darkness of the Amazonian house is a deterrent to flying [415] insects. In strange contrast to the house were the old aluminium pots and tin trunks lying inside – a sharp reminder that we had left the Piraparaná. The headman and his family had deserted the house and it was now used by the occasional passing Indian as a resting-place.

114 We met two *caucheros* who had their houses on the river bank. One of them, Alirio, was half-Indian by birth. His father had been a European-educated official of the Colombian government, who in his later years had preferred the life of the forest. Alirio had known no other life; he had married an Indian girl and now spent his days collecting wild rubber, selling it to another *cauchero* further down the river. He was talkative and eager to help; he told us of a botanist – Dr Schultes – whom he had accompanied beyond the first rapids on the Piraparaná. When he knew we had come all the way from the Vaupés he seemed almost disbelieving. He told us on no account should we continue all the way to the Caquetá on this river, for there were many rapids; moreover, nearer the mouth of the river there were falls, one nearly as big as Jirijimo. Our only way was by a portage which led through the forest to another river, the Miritiparaná. From there it was possible, he

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said, to travel all the way to the Caquetá without encountering more rapids. We would have to leave our boat behind on the Apaporis, as it would be impossible to take it across without the assistance of many Indians. We would have to get help from the Miritiparaná, and a boat, in order to continue our journey to the Caquetá. This was the first time that we knew exactly what lay ahead of us; from then on we would follow Alirio's instructions. He kindly sent his son and one of his workmen to help us over the rapids which we had to pass before the portage. That night we came to Lugo's house where we had a less friendly welcome. Heavy-set, urbane and gold-toothed, Lugo offered us little. We asked if we could sling our hammocks in the house and he grudgingly consented; so Brian asked him to join us in a meal. Horacio was furious. 'Why?' he said. 'Why should we offer him our hospitality?... It is for him to invite us.'

The following day, as we continued down the river, we wondered why Lugo should have been forced to live out his life in the forests of the Amazon. Surely it could not have been his wish; and what did he fear in strangers? Perhaps it was better than a lifetime in gaol. Later, while we were collecting rock samples, we came across the rock carvings called Boheniambo. Scattered over the flat sandstone island in the centre of the river, these formalized carvings, none of them more than two feet long, seemed to be imitations of Chibcha art from the Andean highlands. The figures, with stylized triangular head, square body and foreshortened arms crossed in front of the chest, were a contrast to the more natural art of the Piraparaná.

There was no moon that night and the rain clouds were heavy, as we tried to find the small hut which would show where the portage lay. Flashing our torch along the bank we became anxious. Somewhere below us lay more rapids and we were afraid of being swept away into them. Suddenly the beam of the torch showed up a small grass-roofed shelter – it was the portage. We knew the worst of our journey was over. The same night Horacio went ahead with José to see if he could make contact with a *cauchero*, Don Carlos, whom Alirio had spoken of. We unloaded *El Diablo* for the last time, for here she had to be abandoned.

Don Carlos greeted us as if passing travellers were an everyday occurrence. Tall, slim and proud, like a Bogotano, he was the last person we would have expected to find here. Though he wore a pyjama top and had a towel round his neck to flick flies and wipe the sweat from his forehead, he looked as if he might be equally at home in a dark suit, with white collar and furled umbrella.

In no time our great heap of equipment was whisked away by Indian helpers across the portage. The difficulties we had foreseen seemed to vanish. Five hours later we were sitting down to a magnificent meal of chicken and rice in Don Carlos's wooden-frame house, surrounded by green banana palms and manioc plantations overlooking the muddy Miritiparaná.

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249
464
648 That evening the conversation turned to rubber, the exploitation of the Indians and the atrocities. There had been two booms in the area. The first died out with the end of the First World War and the increased production in Malaya. Then with the Japanese occupation of South-East Asia during the Second World War, attention again switched to the Amazon and this continued into the fifties. Now only small interests remain and although the Indians are well paid and housed, the old fear of the *caucheros* is still there and many prefer to live their own lives.

Carlos told us that he had sixteen Indians working for him. Most of them only worked during the summer months – from November to March – when the forest was drier. If there was rain the latex from the wild rubber could not be collected. During the winter months the Indians returned to their homes to attend to their *chagras*. The men cut traces through the forest at fifty-yard intervals within easy shouting distance of one another, so that none of the trees are missed. Each morning they place small wooden cups beneath a fresh slash in the bark, returning later to empty the latex into rubber bags slung on their backs. A different section of the forest is covered each day until the cycle is completed and they start again. When the rubber is brought back to the house formic acid is added, though any organic acid can be used, even lemon juice. This coagulates the rubber which is then rolled into sheets, some of which Carlos showed us hanging from the roof-beams of his house.

At the end of a season's gathering the rubber is shipped in bales up the Caquetá to Araracuara. From there it is flown to the merchants in Bogotá – usually in May and June – and Carlos added, 'This is about the only time in the year when I see civilization. To save costs we arrange that the plane brings all our supplies and merchandise for the next year on its inward journey. These are mainly for the Indians, for there is nothing he can buy with money here, so I keep a small trade store.'

000 Later Carlos spoke of the Missing Link or Loys' Ape, which he maintained lived in the area. Three years before, one of his young workers was out in his rubber trace when he was suddenly attacked by a beast, which held him fastened to the ground all night. The boy who had fainted from fear, was found the next day and brought to Carlos's house where he took forty-eight hours to recover. He was thoroughly washed but the foul smell of the beast was impossible to remove. Several rubber gatherers claim to have seen the ape in the area of the Miritiparaná. Something very similar has also been reported from the Llanos, in the wooded river valleys near the Orinoco.

539 Stories of the half-human ape are as common as those of lost cities, the Amazonian women and the tribes of white Indians who hunt by night. All occur in the myth and legends of the tribes. But to hear a first-hand account of this ape-man from a reliable witness was unusual.

• 114 Before dawn we set off down river in Carlos's long, narrow, shallow-draught Caquetá boat, faster and more graceful than the stouter ones of the

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Vaupés. Horacio said that every river he had known on the Orinoco and Amazon had something different about it. Each had its own character, its individual appearance; in the same way you could almost tell a river by the boats on it and the way they were handled.

As we travelled down the twisting river we passed an old covered launch going up to the Mission Station. A rotund and bald padre standing at the wheel gave us a cheerful wave as the boat chugged on its way. Close behind him came a canoe full of tin-helmeted anti-malarial workers. We reflected that one day they might reach the Piraparaná and daub their black DDT stamps over the *maloca* entrances. That night we camped on a long sand-bar and, armed with shotgun and torches, we dazzled the crocodiles. Few of them were more than five feet long. Carlos shot at them before they could run off the spit into the water. One was half-stunned by the roar of a near miss; his back glistening emerald-green in the torchlight, he glared defiance at us as we slipped a noose about his belly. We had had a request from Dr Medem, the zoologist in Bogotá, to bring a crocodile back, alive. Luckily, perhaps, he escaped a few days later.

The Caquetá seemed like a great lake studded with sandbanks and wooded islands. It was impossible to tell at a glance which way the water was flowing. We learnt the reason for this as we came to the rapids of Cordoba. These acted as a dam and funnelled a river over a mile wide through a channel no more than a hundred yards across. Keeping well to the right bank, we passed through the swirling white water and rocky projections without mishap. Two days later four convicts escaped from the national prison at Araracuara; being unfamiliar with the river they took the left bank of the rapid in their flimsy raft, only to be swept into a whirlpool. The two who survived were taken prisoner by the frontier-post guards. They had been less than ten miles from the Brazilian border and freedom.

Two hours below the rapids we saw a white statue of the Virgin Mary overlooking the river and, behind, the green sward and grey huts of La Pedrera, the military border post. There we could put through a radio call – a Catalina would pick us up and we would be back in Bogotá in forty-eight hours. It was an incredible thought. On the bank where we moored the boat there was an old wooden bandstand, like those you find in an Oslo park. Inside was a barber's chair and a broken mirror. We looked at our three-month-old beards, our sun-blackened faces – and laughed.

But that evening as we glumly surveyed the pile of equipment and the collection, we pondered on the Commandante's words: 'No plane will land here on the river, there have been too many accidents in the past. Besides, we have no means of communication, the transmitter has broken down. I am sorry . . .!'

What were we to do? It was better that one of us should make contact as soon as possible, so Brian travelled down river to the Brazilian frontier post.

104 man, English, etc. There is great variation in the spellings. The spellings in this paper tend to follow those of Koch-Grünberg, who still remains the general authority for the area as a whole. His spellings are close to those used for Nheengatú. They generally conform with those used for world-wide ethnographic spellings; in addition, they seem to have been the spellings more commonly used in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish ethnographies on South America.

101 161 191 *Population estimate.* Population figures are hard to estimate. The following are very impressionistic. Tribes with 1,000–2,000 members: Tukano, Kubeo, Baré; Spanish-only speakers. Tribes with 500–1,000 members: Piratapuyo, Wanano, Desano. Tribes with 150–500 members: Tuyuka, Yurutí, Paneroa, Eduria, Karapana, Tatuyo, Barasana, Siriano, Tariano, Tabaino, Makuna, Tekuana, Datuana; Portuguese-only speakers. Of the latter tribes, Yurutí, Yekuana, and Datuana may number [797] fewer than 150 members. A few Salesian missionaries, in Brazil, are Italians.

There are probably a few hundred Makú in occasional contract with the multilingual Indians in this area.

Non-Indians probably number about 1,500 and are concentrated in the few air-strip towns.

For a very round figure, a population of 10,000 has been estimated for the multilingual area in which Tukano is the chief lingua franca. Of these 10,000, only the non-Indians, the Makú, and some of the Kubeo are not multilingual, so that over 80 percent of the population is multilingual. As the non-Indians are concentrated in the few air-strip towns and a dozen missionary posts, the effective distribution of multilingualism is much higher; close to 100 percent of the communities encountered in the area are multilingual. Of the multilingual Indians, well over 90 percent know Tukano at least as a lingua franca, with young children accounting for the majority of the few who do not.

NOTES

[114] [12] [1] This report is an expanded version of a paper presented to the Tenth Annual National Conference on Linguistics in New York on March 13, 1965. Field work was done in the summers of 1959, 1960, and 1962 and from June to December 1963. It was supported during much of this time by USPHS Research Grant MH-17,258. I wish to acknowledge the hospitality and cooperation extended to me by the Xaveriano missionary order in Colombia and the Salesian missionaries of the Brazilian Vaupés region. Various drafts of this paper were read by Drs. Charles

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7: Sorensen E-5 (1959-1963) 1967
SQ19 Tucano SQ19

114 [7] See Rivera's powerful, authentic novel *La Vorágine* (1948) for Vaupense Spanish terms. The setting for much of this novel is the Colombian Vaupés region and the adjacent Casanare region (not dealt with, except indirectly, in this report). Rivera projected his morally and passionately torn protagonist, Arturo Cova, in ever-increasingly involved relief against the convoluted setting of the exploits of the notorious rubber barons. His Indians show up only as shadowy figures in the background—no doubt the way the rubber-gatherers, caught up in their own problems, saw them as they paused in dimly lit longhouses for their night's rest.

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